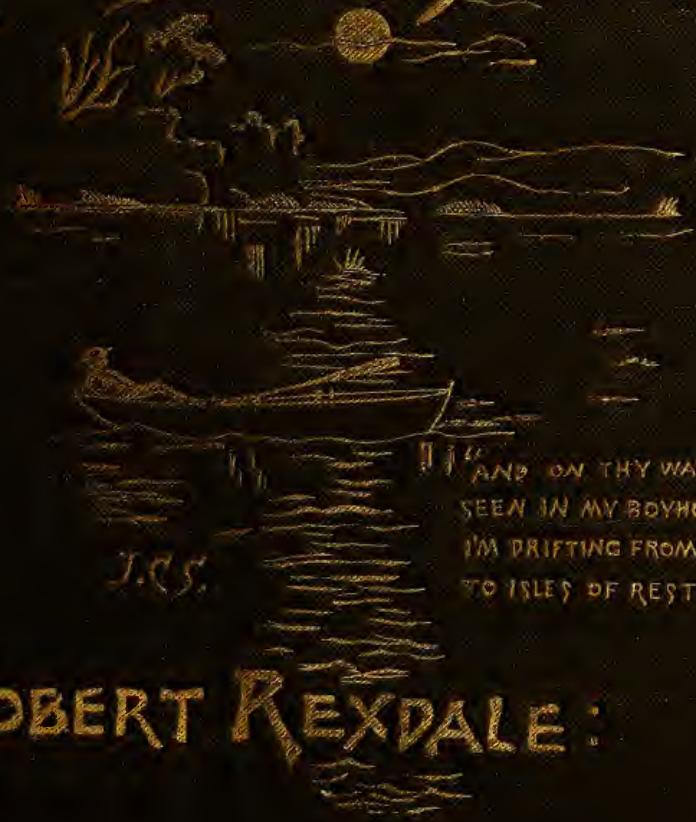




DRIFTING

SONGS and
SKETCHES:



J.R.S.

|| "AND ON THY WAVES OF ROSY LIGHT,
SEEN IN MY BOYHOOD'S HAPPY VISION,
I'M DRIFTING FROM THE SHORES OF NIGHT
TO ISLES OF REST IN REALMS ELYSIAN!"

ROBERT REXDALE:

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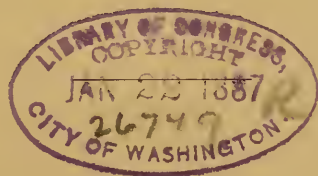
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Drifting Songs and Sketches.

BY
ROBERT REXDALE.



PORTLAND, ME.:
WILLIAM H. STEVENS & COMPANY.
(SUCCESSORS TO HOYT, FOGG AND DONHAM.)

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BY THE AUTHOR.

Robert F. Barbour
Portland, Me.

From the Press of Ford & Rich.

“It is one thing to write what may please our friends; who, because they are such, are apt to be a little biased in our favor; and another to write what may please everybody.”—*Cowper*.



DRIFTING.

Q FAIREST maid of rarest days,
Pomona's child with golden tresses !
I loiter in thy sylvan ways,
My heart is warm with thy caresses.
And o'er again, as in a dream,
I voice the words the spell is wreathing,
As in the reeds beside the stream
Pandean pipes are lowly breathing.
I think of one whose starry eyes,
And laughter through the woodland ringing,
And shy caress, and tender sighs,
Attuned the poet's heart to singing.

And like Ausonian king of old,
I listen to the wood nymph's pleading,
While this poor form of human mould
Plods sadly after fancy's leading.

O river rippling to the sea,
Thy silver waters, softly stealing
In shadowed beauty o'er the lea,
Awake the slumbrous chords of feeling.
And on thy waves of rosy light,
Seen in my boyhood's happy vision,
I'm drifting from the shores of night,
To isles of rest in realms Elysian.



TRANSIT OF VENUS.

FULL oft, O Venus! heaven's dearest star,
My eye hath sought thee through the silent night!
In fancy traced thy far empyreal flight
From Paphos' isle of silvery-crested light,
Borne in thy golden car!

A brooding calm seemed on the western seas,
As if to list thy swans' soft rustling wings!
A hush as when some love-lorn naiad sings
To dreamful sleep beside their crystal springs
The nymphs Hesperides.

Across the wave no cry of frightened bird,
No tempest's voice, no sound of laboring oar,
Came on the Night's soft whispers to deplore
Thy gracious presence over sea and shore,
No fluttering pinion stirred.

O tranquil hour!—sweet olive branch of peace,
Plucked where life's stormy deluge billows roll!
Come thou again to cheer the weary soul,
And bid it quaff from joy's o'er-brimming bowl,
Till its vain longings cease.

And thou, O Sun ! be kind to her I love,
As now she glides into thy waiting arms !
For ere the dawning she forsakes thy charms,
To seek again the whispering Isle of Palms,
And home of cooing dove.

Then not again, until the circling nodes
Have run the course omniscient Jove decreed,
Shall she to thee her rolling cycles lead,
And at thy feet with beauty's minions plead
For rest in thy abodes.

But he who sings a mortal's trembling tones,
With senses wrapped in life's great mystery,
Will nevermore, O wayward Venus ! see
Thy kneeling form at great Apollo's knee,
Above earth's changing zones.

And yet I cry, Oh ! for thy kindly beam,
As my poor shade drifts toward the deathless strand !
Lest it should miss old Charon's beckoning hand,
And wander lonely in the silent land,
Where flows dark Lethe's stream !

AT HYMEN'S SHRINE.

QU! for the Thracian minstrel's song,
Whose magic lyre charmed earth and sea,
And called his lost Eurydice
From out the dark and phantom throng!

For two whose virtues ever shone
Resplendent, set by hand divine,
Have bowed before the chancel shrine,
And Love has come to claim his own.

Oh! wondrous change of fleeting years.
Time bears us in his ruthless hand,
And as we near each fairy strand
Some newer phase of life appears.

To-day the tender floweret blows,
To-morrow's sun the leaves unfold,
And then its simple tale is told—
The bud has blossomed to the rose!

But not alone in mystic rhyme,
Nor fancies of a poet's brain,
Shall unto other hours remain
The memory of this joyous time.

In after days, whate'er betide,
The cycles of the changing year
Will bring a morn still ever dear,
To thrill the hearts of groom and bride.

For those who walk the flowery way,
When life is in its golden prime,
Must list again the merry chime
That ushered in their marriage day.

Till, borne upon the silent stream,
Fond memory sets her silken sails,
And, wafted by the evening gales,
Is lost amid the Isles of Dream.

WHITTIER.

AWAKE, O lyre! thy tender rhythmic throng,
And bid them pause attendant to my theme!
For lo! to-night, above the heights of dream,
I watch a barque upon the deathless stream,
And list the boatman's song.

O gentle Bard! rest on thy weary oars,
Nor longing turn thee toward the silent land!
Too soon the tide lifts to its golden strand,
Where wait for thee the vanished poet band,
Upon immortal shores.

Of all whose song has thrilled our western isle,
Thou art the last and dearest to remain!
Thy voice still rings with Freedom's grand refrain,
And we respond to each quick-pulsing strain,
Devoid of earthly guile.

O starry gems that deck the brow of Night,
Veil not thine orbs in yonder azure spheres!
A life as pure as chaste Diana's tears
Drifts softly down the ripples of the years,
Beneath thy tender light!

DROPPED DEAD.

TRANGER he was to the pitiless throng,
Viewing his corse as they bore him along,
Heedless for aye of their laughter and song—
Dropped dead !

Low was the message that called him away,
Swift as the thought of a child in its play,
And in the grandeur of silence he lay—
Dropped dead !

Only a heart whose pulsations are o'er,
Only a form that will journey no more,
Only a shade for the Stygian shore—
Dropped dead !

Ah ! but the gaze of his wondering eyes,
Piercing the blue of the midsummer skies,
Looked where the Island of Mystery lies—
Dropped dead !

What did he whisper, O poet, to thee ?
Joys of an infinite glory to be,
Dreams of a soul by the shadowless sea—
Dropped dead !

AMONG THE SHADOWS.

ITHIN the city's throbbing heart,
Where life is bright and gay,
There nestles from the world apart
A graveyard old and gray.

O'er mossy walls the ivy falls
In slender sprays of green,
And silently the lichen crawls
The narrow mounds between.

Here oft, in childhood's joyous hours,
My errant steps have strayed
From pleasure's warm, sunshiny bowers,
Into the realms of shade.

And pensively my fancy roamed
Adown the years to be,
Where fairy castles, jewel-domed,
Gleamed through the mists for me.

The victor's sword was mine to wield
In battle with the foe,
And love of truth and right the shield
That met the tyrant's blow.

Ah! had our feet ne'er left the slope
That seemed so bright of yore,
We would not need to blindly grope
Along a darkened shore!

But now the twilight shadow creeps
Across the harbor bar,
And o'er the tranquil azure deeps
Climbs up a lonely star.

O angel Night! thy dewy wing
Enfolds the spirit's dream,
And to the fevered heart you bring
A balm from Kedron's stream!

The subtle web that fancy weaves
Lies broken on the tomb,
While in the path of rustling leaves
I wander through the gloom.

L O N G F E L L O W .

SEVENTY-FIVE bright, golden years,
Journeying toward an all-wise Giver.
Seventy-five ! And yet he hears
The rippling sob of Time's great river.

Still for us is his music heard,
Strong and clear are its notes of warning ;
Still are the lute-strings sweetly stirred,
Warm is his heart as in life's morning.

Turn, O muse ! to that wondrous page,
Glowing for aye with song and story ;
Brush with thy wing the mists of age,
Sing of the minstrel's youthful glory.

Here the scenes of his boyhood hours,
Where 'far-surrounding seas' are gleaming ;
And here the woodland's breezy bowers,
Now sacred to his hours of dreaming.

His was a triumph brave and grand,
Worthy the laurel's proud caressing;
His the touch of a master hand,
Ever the notes of wrong suppressing.

Only the gleam of silver sails,
Under the even's purple glowing;
Only a glimpse of distant vales,
Where the fountains of Fame are flowing.

For softly down the western wave,
Toward shadowed isles his barque is drifting;
While still his song so pure and brave
Our burdens from the heart is lifting.

Seventy-five bright, golden years,
Journeying toward an all-wise Giver.
Seventy-five! No more he hears
The rippling sob of Time's great river.

THE CRICKET.

RALUEN, vexed and weary
With the dreamy summer day,
Said the cricket's song was dreary,
Thought the shadows cold and gray.
"Little maiden, little maiden,"
Seemed the cricket's chant to be,
"Life to day with love is laden,
God is good to you and me."
Sang the cricket in the thicket,
By the swiftly-flowing stream;
Softly ope'd the golden wicket,
To the fairy land of Dream!

Stars of Elfand! faintly stealing
Through the mists that fold the night,
I a child again am kneeling
In the splendor of thy light.
O ye tinkling, foam-white fountains,
Bathe me in your silver spray!

On yon heights of sunset mountains,
O ye elfin harpists! play.
Bid me enter at the portal,—
Life is dreary, filled with pain,
For the youth that seemed immortal
Thrills no more the pulse and brain.

Araluen! child of laughter,
Would that life were young to me;
Filled with dreams of some hereafter,
Bright, and beautiful, and free!
Evermore with thee to ponder,
By the river's ceaseless flow;
Evermore with thee to wander,
Where the tangled roses grow.
While the cricket in the thicket,
By the swiftly-flowing stream,
Guards for aye the golden wicket
To the fairy land of Dream!

E U T E R P E .

THIS hour so beautiful with bloom
Is sacred to the muse of song!
Its glowing sunset heights illumine
The hopes o'ershadowed by the tomb,
And bid the fainting soul be strong.

And now Euterpe's harp is crowned
With gems that flash like morning rays.
She gives us music for each wound,
And bids the spirit lift its gaze
To skies blue-arched above the mound.

If olden memories of tears,
The ghosts of unforgotten pain,
Rise through the mournful mists of years!
She sings of undiscovered spheres,
And solace brings the weary brain.

O sentient Lyre! O breathing Shell!

Thy mission to the world we own;
Since in the light of thy sweet spell,
That star like o'er the desert shone,
New scenes of beauty rise and dwell.

So heavenward, on triumphant wings,

Take flight, tired heart! and end thy quest.
Where Music's wand hath touched the springs,
And love is in the song she sings,
There flow the crystal streams of Rest.



MARGUERITA.*

TAR that shineth through the gloaming,
Fairest gem on even's brow !
Far away my heart is roaming,
As at Memory's shrine I bow.
And my song to-night entwineth
With affection's tender flower,
For thy light, O star ! enshrineth
Memories of the twilight hour.
Marguerita, Marguerita,
Pure as yonder beauteous star !
Thou art nearer, thou art dearer,
Than all earthly maidens are.
Once again this bosom pillows,
In the blissful vales of dream,
Her who sleeps beneath the willows,
By Mahahlah's lonely stream !
On my brow she softly presses
Seals of love devoid of guile,

As our fond good-night caresses
Mingle at the parting stile.
Marguerita, Marguerita,
Pure as yonder beauteous star !
Thou art nearer, thou art dearer,
Than all earthly maidens are.

Long ago we met and parted,
'Neath Italia's golden skies ;
And I wander, weary hearted,
Where young Marguerita lies.
Fate's decree our lives did sever,
Death hath chilled the lovely flower,
But her name will wake for ever
Memories of the twilight hour.
Marguerita, Marguerita,
Pure as yonder beauteous star !
Thou art nearer, thou art dearer,
Than all earthly maidens are.

* Music by J. L. Gilbert, Boston.

TO A LILY.

Q REGAL Lily on thy slender spear,
To-day thou reignest on a golden throne!
Thy emerald robes are round thee lightly blown;
And I, a mortal of this rolling sphere,
Have dared to look within thy sacred shrine,
Pandora-like to seek that mystic power
Which bids thee bloom as Hope's immortal flower.
But vain, ah! vain, this hapless quest of mine!
Yet, folded in thy voiceless petals, seem
Sad whispers breathing from the realms of Care:
"O wayward one on Time's unfriendly stream,
Though now thy barque in stormy courses bear,
There is a vale where fadeless blossoms blow,
And through the years Hope's peaceful rivers flow!"

E U R Y L E E .

Q'ER the desert sands of duty,
Hope allures to isles of beauty,
Eurylee!

Where yon starry heights are glowing,
And the streams of Song are flowing,
There is bliss beyond our knowing,
Eurylee!

Oh, thine eyes are on me beaming,
As the raptured soul is dreaming,
Eurylee!

And my heart is blithely singing,
While to thee its flight is winging,
Rarest treasures homeward bringing,
Eurylee!

And from realms of love eternal,
Sweet, seraphic strains supernal,
Eurylee!

O'er the wearied spirit breaking,
Bear a balm to soothe its aching,
Thoughts of hours with thee awaking,
Eurylee!

Thou art lost to me forever,
For the seas of Fate dis sever,
Eurylee!

But thy memory o'er me stealing,
Harps upon the strings of feeling,
Joy's elusive isles revealing,
Eurylee!



*STRIKE YOUR LYRES.**

 **STRIKE** your lyres and raise the song,
Ye hosts of jubilee!
Joyful anthems now belong,
O Machigonne! to thee.
For thy loving children kneel,
At the altars of their sires.
Then awake the welcome-peal,
Strike! strike your lyres.

O'er the ocean of the years,
Shines out Jehovah's smile!
And his hand the shallop steers,
Where lifts the Hundredth Isle.
Hosts advancing! see the land,
Lighted by its signal fires;
All is joy upon the strand,
Strike! strike your lyres.

Gladly, on this natal day,
Proud city of our love !
Tribute at thy feet we lay,
With offerings above.
Peace be thine forevermore,
O land of pure desires !
Minstrels of the golden shore,
Strike ! strike your lyres.

* Page 114, History Portland Centennial.



T E N N Y S O N.

To thee, O bard of our dear motherland,
Belongs the tribute of my humble strain!
And though the lyre, in Youth's impulsive hand,
Parnassus' song-swept heights may fail to gain,
It wafts to thee, o'er England's distant seas,
The fountain whispers of Castalides.

Led by the magic of thy poet charm,
I sought the wondrous quarry fields of rhyme.
Saw where great Shakspeare wrought with mighty arm,
And Milton groped upon the verge of time,
Essaying with his sightless eyes to scan
The guilty face of earth's primeval man.

With thee I climbed the cloud aspiring tower,
A patient seeker for the sacred grail;
Or touched the lute in Guinevere's fair bower,

While love-lit eyes kept watch adown the vale;
Or shared in peace the hermit's mystic grot,
When slumbrous wings poised over Cämëlot.

And though the heart that writhed beneath its sting,
Hath wandered alien on a far off strand,
Still will it seek for Hope's o'er-bubbling spring,
And restful shadows in a weary land!
Where Genius, toiling by the whispering rill,
May weave the web with all Arachne's skill.



IN THE GLOAMING.

LIKE the far away gleam
Of a mist-hidden stream,
The joys of the morning are showing!
But their light, as it nears,
Shall illumine the years
Where waters of Lethe are flowing.

Though we mingle no more
On that magical shore,
Where brightly the sunlight is shining!
There are raptures that blend
When the shadows descend,
And life to its close is declining.

For the stars will arise
In our evening skies,
The blossoms will bloom in the heather!
While so trustful and true,
We will look to the blue,
And wait in the gloaming together.

COLD IS THE HEART.

GOLD is the heart, O sailor boy,
That beat so warm and true for thee!
And o'er her grave the willows wave,
By Machigona's moaning sea.
Yet on her lips thy lingering name
Was breathed with each expiring tone,
As through the deepening shadows came,
"Where art thou? O my love, my own."

She whispered to the stormy main,
O lad who wooed, O lad who won!
The faith that's thine while stars shall shine,
Or roses bloom, or streamlets run.
And oft, as under peaceful skies
Our songs awoke the moonlit bay,
A tear hath dimmed her tender eyes
For thee so far—so far away.

When Night shall fold its dewy wings,
And silence broods upon the deep !
Her spirit dear will guard thee near,
And o'er thy rest its vigils keep.
In dreams will she draw close to thee,
Until the shadows shall have flown !
But yet thy waking thought must be,
"Where art thou ? O my love, my own."



T O - M O R R O W .

FOR hopes that were wrecked on the drear isle of sorrow,
We crave not your pity, nor ask for your tears.
Leave us here with our thoughts of the golden To-morrow,
In the halcyon hush of the dawning that nears!
Where cares cease to trouble,
And Life's mystic bubble
Drifts peacefully out on the tide of the years.
Oh, days that are dead! you were ghosts of the fancy,
And tortured the heart to its deep-thrilling core!
But freed from the thrall of your dark necromancy,
We drift with the bubble and sing to the shore.

THE SHIELD OF GOLD.

"A bow-shot from her bower eaves,
He rode between the barley sheaves."—*Tennyson.*

FULL-ORBED and bright the harvest moon
Rose o'er the hills of Cämëlot !
And in the lonely hermit's grot
The cheerful cricket harped in tune.
And stately o'er the dewy wold
There rode a knight with shield of gold
From fairy-isled Shallot !

The splendor glorified the height,
And filled the barren barley field !
And on the knight a starry light
Flashed ever from the golden shield,
As on he rode, serene and proud,
With mien unmoved, with head unbowed,
To where the lowly hermit kneeled.

“O father Merlin! hoary sage,
Nought knowest thou of loves or wars!
But peering in thy wizard page,
Thou learnest of divinest laws.
And at this hour, when to the skies
Thy thoughts on peaceful pinions rise,
My life’s great secret read—nor pause.”

Though scornful was the hermit’s air,
It pity more that hate expressed.
He marvelled than gay Waldemare
Had ridden on so strange a quest;
For he was lord of lute and lance,
A wielder of the tender glance,
And beauty’s glowing cheek had pressed.

“And wouldst thou know, O fickle one,
The tale the book reveals to me?
Then seek yon grave ere yet the sun
Hath sparkled on Tintagil’s sea!
Oh, soothe the wound! oh, right the wrong,
And wake the silent heart with song
That broke and died for love of thee.”

And ever, where the mournful wave
In solemn requiem hath rolled,
A phantom knight with shield of gold
Is watching o'er a moonlit grave!
And oft the listening hermit hears,
When winds blow fair across the meres,
A soul for mercy crave!



SONNET.

FOR thee, fair maid of Erudition's bowers,
In Life's bright vales rare buds of friendship blow,
And tender, slender, fragrant blossoms grow,
As joy entwines the pleasure-laden hours !
While upward borne on flight of airy wing,
The minstrel kneels in Song's melodious fanes,
To list the music of transcendent strains,
And in some lightly-flowing measure sing :
"Thou, Erato ! sweet muse of blissful spheres,
On this dear maid bestow thy smile benign ;
That as the soul its lofty temple rears,
And trusting footsteps near thy mystic shrine,
Love's joyous light may on her pathway shine,
And beam refulgent through the distant years !"

YOUTH.

UR Youth is but a fairy page,
Whereon is traced with mystic art,
Ere yet the eye is dimmed by age,
Each happy secret of the heart.

Be brave to read, O Youth! and heed
The lessons that it bids thee learn!
There comes to all a crowning meed,
Though we no silver clouds discern.

Have little hands no work to do,
In Life's far-gleaming harvest field?
Have little hearts no loves to woo,
Shall tiny seeds no fruitage yield?

No rose that blows in leafy June,
But from a baby bud has grown;
The dewdrop sparkled in the moon,
And to the petal's cup was blown.

The mighty oak, whose branches throw
A shadow on the placid stream,
Ere God had bid it wake and grow,
Lay in the acorn's heart a-dream !

So thus may we, who helpless lean
Upon the Master's guiding arm,
If we in Youth's fair vineyard glean,
Be shielded from the shafts of harm.

And when at last our earthly sun
Goes down on Life's great harvest day,
His hand will bind the sheaves undone,
And guide us on our homeward way !



E A S T E R .

HAIL, sweet morn of resurrection !

Here we humbly bend the knee,
And the tendrils of affection
Twine now lovingly for thee.
Decked with garlands of the springtime,
Seemest thou a child of May,
But a pensive light is dwelling
In thy thoughtful eyes of gray.
Sad art thou, O Easter day !

Star of hope ! we need thy guidance,
And our songs to thee must flow.
Hearts are weary, lives are dreary,
Waiting till the roses blow !
Oh ! the hopes, the joys, the sorrows,
Fond good-byes and bright to-morrows,
That have perished,
Loved and cherished,
Since the days of long ago.

Though the shadows steal around thee,
They are April's smile and tear,
While our loyal hearts have crowned thee
Queen of all the joyous year.
For thou comest when earth's beauties
Burst from out their wintry tomb,
And our spirits, like the blossoms,
Spring to sunlight from the gloom.
Welcome then, O day of bloom !



WHEN CURFEW RINGS.

ERE breaks the morn, loved Helavieve,
My barque shall woo the favoring gales,
As far from thee, O star of eve!
They waft me from sweet Mona's vales.
But destiny will watch between
The lives that seas must soon divide;
Thou art my country and my queen,
And I'll be true whate'er betide.
Then mark the hour when curfew rings,
O'er yonder elfin haunted lea!
And on the Night's soft-rustling wings,
My heart will wander back to thee.
O maiden fair, O maiden rare,
Thou art so near and dear to me,
Thy memory is an olden air
That pulses o'er the twilight sea.
No voice but thine this bosom thrills,
Since hope is in its lightest tone,

And e'en thy songs by moonlit rills
Breathed of the love you dared not own.
Then mark the hour when curfew rings,
O'er yonder elfin haunted lea !
And on the Night's soft-rustling wings,
My heart will wander back to thee.

Thy tender eyes their meshes weave,
And hold the parting soul in thrall,
As to my heart, O Helavieve,
I fold thee while the shadows fall.
The hour has come !—one long farewell,
For lo ! my sight grows dim with tears.
Thou tellest me, old curfew bell,
We may not meet again for years.
Then mark the hour when curfew rings,
O'er yonder elfin haunted lea !
And on the Night's soft-rustling wings,
My heart will wander back to thee.

A R C A D E E .

MARGUERITE is young and fair,
Marguerite has golden hair !
Marguerite is kind and true,
And has eyes of rarest blue.

If in Arcadee you meet,
You will know her—Marguerite !
So a message lowly breathe,
Where the hours their garlands wreathe.

Say that when the years have flown,
I will claim her as my own !
Nevermore to cross the tide,
Nor to leave my darling's side.

Marguerite will pace the strand,
Marguerite will wave her hand !
Marguerite will welcome me,
On the shores of Arcadee.

T W I L I G H T.

SACRED hour that steals into the soul,

When yon bright orb for me no more doth burn !

Though shattered be to-night the golden bowl,

And all Life's weary wheels should cease to turn,

Thy gentle voice shall calm my utmost fears,

Thy mystic grace shall plead for me with tears.

Vexed by the passions of the fleeting day,

Assailed by doubts, beset by subtle snares,

I come a pilgrim in the shadows gray ;

As one who, wearied by the load he bears,

Leans on his staff to hail the evening star,

That rising gilds the distant harbor-bar.

Is there no balm in all fair Gilead's plain,

To soothe the anguish of the tempter's sting ?

Siloam's waters ! gush they not again,

Nor cool Bethesda lave the angel's wing ?

O Death ! pale warder of the garnered grain,

Must thy cold hand alone assuage the pain ?

Yet were it not for moments such as these,
To peer within the future's misty vail,
Our lives would be as ships on trackless seas,
Devoid of hope, bereft of oar and sail !
And man, poor wreck of passion and decay,
Would drift where faith ne'er sheds a cheering ray.
So take, O Lord ! this one brief hour of mine,
In recompense for years of fruitless yield.
Draw near to me, O loving Heart divine !
And from the tempest and its dangers shield.
Though dark the mists and strong the adverse tide,
No fear is mine if Thou be at my side.



TO THE OLD YEAR.

OLD Year! we will laugh, as the goblet we quaff,
And sorrow forget in the wine's bright flowing!

On its mystical tide together we glide,
To islets of song in the ocean so wide,
Where rarest of fancies and pleasures abide,
And clustering hopes of the years are growing.

Oh, oft in the strife and the folly of life,
Song bursts from out of a heart that is breaking!
Till up from the calm there has stolen a charm,
Alluring away to the realms of the palm,
Where nymphs of the isle have distilled us a balm,
To soften the pain of the spirit's aching.

The song with a tear now is blended, Old Year!

A new light is seen through mists of the morning.
The heart once so bold is now silent and cold,
As thy form to my bosom I tenderly fold,
And lay thee away with the years that have rolled
In their ebb and their flow from the dawning.

D R E A M I N G .

AIDEN of the dark blue eye,
In whose trustful depths are dwelling
Golden dreams of by-and-by,
Blissful years to thee foretelling!
Oft the minstrel's lute would wake
Strains that lure to realms of gladness,
Did not pensive thought partake
Of the twilight gloom of sadness.
Though the skies are bright to-day,
Canst thou tell me of the morrow?
If the heart will still be gay,
Or shall weep alone in sorrow.
For in youth we long to know
Where our human hopes are tending,
Ere the sunset colors glow
In the blue above us bending.

And I cannot help but dream,
In this sweet September weather,
As beside the sunlit stream
We are loitering together,
Of the silent years to be,
Where the sluggish waves are flowing,
And I cry, "O Time!—for me,
All too swift thy sands are going."

Maiden of the dark blue eye,
May there nought our friendship sever,
Should we part and say good-bye,
Ne'er to meet on earth forever!
Other friends may prove as true
To thy glance so pure and tender;
Ah! but tell me, eyes of blue,
Will our dreams retain their splendor?



C R E E D S.

How barren seem these human creeds,
When Life's resistless tide recedes
Out to the shoreless sea !
Our voyage with the boatman pale,
That mystic walk within the vale,
Without their light must be.

The worm that grovels at our feet,
Looks up its Maker's smile to greet,
And owns His love divine.
And man—poor worm of greater mould !
Shall not his clearer sight behold
The Father's grand design ?

Then cease the tumult of your strife,
O creeds that seek each other's life,
Ye bear an empty name !
The narrow pathway up to God,
In which angelic hosts have trod,
Is lit by purer flame.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

THIS is not the blue of summer skies,
Nor beauty born to perish,
Wherein the happy secret lies—
But friends we love and cherish.

A kindly word, a sunny smile,
Like waters brightly flowing,
May lead the heart from paths of guile,
And set the bloom a-growing!



E I G H T E E N .

BONNIE lass wi' eye sae blue,
Ye dinna ken the years to be;
And canna tell who, false or true,
May o'er the seas come wooing thee.
But dinna leave dear Scotia's hills,
Her heather bloom and laughing rills,
To wander, oh! sae far away,
Frae those who blèss thy natal day.
O bonnie lass wi' eye sae blue,
Our ain true-hearted Annieu!



THE TYPO'S RAVING. *

ONCE upon a midnight dreary,
All in vain I sought the cheery,
Soft, somnolent god of slumber,
Tired nature to restore.
All in vain my thoughts of napping,
Vainer still my puny tapping
At the door of sleep—now wrapping
In its folds the silent shore.
“Tis the tautog,” said Ulychis,
“For thy blood it much too rich is,”—
Only this, and nothing more.

And the silken, sad, uncertain
Banging of the window curtain,
Thrilled me—filled me with splenetic
Fancies never known before ;
For my eyelids now were closing,
And anon I should be dozing,

Land of Nod in dreams disclosing,
And perchance I may have swore,
"That confounded window curtain
Woke me up, I now am certain,"—
Only this, and nothing more.

Presently my soul grew stronger;
Night could last but little longer:
At the morning's early dawning
I would pace beside the shore,
Pour libations to Aurora,
(Weary Typos all adore her,)
Watch the sea-gull—early soarer,
Listen to the ocean's roar;
Listen to the mighty ocean,
Home of turmoil, force and motion,
Rolling on forevermore.

Once again in dreams I wandered,
O'er a book I deeply pondered;
And from out its musty pages,
Dog-eared, dingy, tost and tore,
Crept the ghosts of other ages,
Knights and ladies, squires and pages,

And the tilt or tourney wages
As it did in days of yore.
Ah ! my soul is prone to sadness,
For those days of mirth and gladness
Now are lost forevermore.

Then methought the scene had shifted,
And a "fat take" I had "lifted"
From a stone of pure Carrara
Standing near the sanctum door ;
And the sharp, incessant clicking
Of the type that I was "sticking,"
Sounded like the measured ticking
Of the clock—now pointing four :
In the east the day was dawning,
And the harbingers of morning
Sang their matins o'er and o'er.

But my dreamful sleep was broken
By a soft word, lowly spoken,
And Ulychis' fairy footfalls
Tinkled on my chamber floor !
"Rise, O sluggard ! from thy dreaming,
For the eye of day is beaming,

And the hungry gull is screaming
 From his perch beside the shore ;
 Rise, and quaff the kind nepenthe
 Angels from below have sent thee,
 Who thy presence now implore.”

* * * *

And to-night the pale October
 Moon is gleaming, soft and sober,
 O'er the darksome woods that border
 All along the farther shore ;
 But distinctly I remember
 That drear time in mild September,
 When from fancy's burning ember,
 As they never had before,
 Blinked the foes to peaceful slumber,
 And the cares that day encumber
 Perched above my chamber door !

* NOTE.—This and the following effusions, in themselves unworthy of preservation, are included in this volume solely because of their associations. So the author, while admitting the force of any criticisms that may be made, has no further apologies to offer for his apparent lack of good judgment.

A MOSAIC.

H! the good old days of Moses,
When the decalogue was young!
How our patriarchal noses
Lift to hear their praises sung!
Then no wicked Sunday papers
Came to drive away the blues,
And the milkman's merry capers
Ne'er disturbed our morning snooze!
But around old Nebo's mountain
Silence, "like a poultice," lay,
And no druggist's soda fountain
Led the inner man astray!
Oh! the good old days of Moses,
They are waiting at the gate!
So the multitude supposes
By the sermons heard of late!
But the gentle voice of Reason
Whispers in her children's ear,

“Common sense is never treason
To the prophet, bard, or seer !”
So we’ll think the matter over,
And let Moses have his due,
But these good old days of Grover
Are the best we ever knew !



O COLLAR!

QUEN the bust of the maid with a B in her name,

O collar, fur collar, O collar,

I spied you one eve in a crocodile frame,

O collar, fur collar, O collar!

Ah! my thoughts thickly flew like the bees in a swarm,

For the heart you enshrined beat so noble and warm,

And the Fates seemed to whisper, "Superb is her form!"

O collar, fur collar, O collar.

And now, in the words of our friend Mickey Doo,

O collar, fur collar, O collar,

May the punishment fit the great crime that I do,

O collar, fur collar, O collar!

In tuning my lyre on nonsensical string,

But I'm earnest and true when I say or I sing,

You're as welcome as flowers that bloom in the spring!

O collar, fur collar, O collar.

THREE MAIDENS.

THREE maidens went sailing away to White Head,

With sandwiches, doughnuts, and pickles galore !

Intent upon having a nice little spread,

In some shady nook on that picturesque shore.

Each thought of the "sub." that then worked at her stand,

And next of the foreman with whiskers so bland,

But most of the beach and its sunshiny sand.

"O girls !" cried a rather impulsive young maid,

Who carried the bottle of red lemonade,

"Let's take off our shoes and our stockings, and wade !"

Three maidens went wading out into the sea,

As happy as clams when the water is high !

Oh ! they were as merry as maidens could be,

Secure from the glance of a masculine eye !

But what to them happened, or how it befel,

Is not in the province of poet to tell,

For silence is golden where beauty doth dwell.

Three maidens exclaim as they sit at their stand,

And smile on the foreman with whiskers so bland,

"Oh ! bother the beach and its sunshiny sand !"

Sketches.

THE ROMAN FATHERS.

HRISTMAS Day, with its customary good cheer, was again drawing nigh, and many a young heart—aye, and many a heart from which the buoyancy of youth had departed—beat a livelier time in anticipating the pleasures of this time-honored festival.

What a host of tender memories start into life at the very mention of the name—Christmas! By many this day is doubly revered, as being the last time they have ever seen many of the dear ones who wished them a tearful God-speed. And can we forget the happy faces assembled around the festal board one brief year ago? Alas! many of the numbers will never again greet us in this life, for they have journeyed to that mysterious bourne whence no traveller returns; yet we are conscious of a nameless presence at our side, and familiar forms are conjured by fancy, till we forget for a season the sad array of vacant places.

At Brownlow farm the preparations for Christmas were conducted on a scale unprecedented in any former year, for it was to be the occasion of a grand gathering of the clans, embracing the Alpha and Omega of the present house of Brownlow.

The family was a large one and well settled in life, and consequently a great number would be present. As a matter of course, it required a vast expenditure of time and labor to cater to the wants of a whole generation, and for days before the old-fashioned kitchen was the scene of immense culinary operations; and many a member of the feathery tribe strutted for the last time about its native barn-yard, ere entering a less ornamental but decidedly more useful state—for what would Christmas be without a goodly supply of poultry?

Dame Brownlow and her numerous help were indefatigable in their efforts to fill the larder, and a sightly array of choice edibles was the result of their industry in this direction. The capacious buttery was filled with all the good things appertaining to a New England feast, not omitting the indispensable pumpkin pie; and if a due regard for the wants of the inner man is the chief feature of these festive occasions—according to Epicurean reasoning—then this promised to be a most enjoyable season indeed.

Brownlow farm, from its situation on one of the main roads leading to the city, had a reputation for generosity among travellers, and the comfortable proportions of the quaint, square-built dwelling seemed to invite the weary and belated to rest beneath its roof.

Squire Brownlow, as he was called, was well liked by his neighbors for his hearty manner and strict integrity,

though he was unrelenting toward those who did him an injury, and it was of little use to appeal from his final decision. Although far advanced in years he was still active and rugged, though of late his vigorous constitution had undergone a marked change, and the rigorous lines of character were being softened by the insidious approach of old age. That something more than usual disturbed his peace of mind this bright December morning was apparent from the far-off look in his eyes, as if watching for one who never came. Yet it was his own unyielding nature that caused him to be unhappy.

Adjoining Brownlow farm was the estate of farmer Fairleigh, and between the two families there had existed for years a bitter feud, growing out of some legal dispute concerning deeds and titles, and augmented by various evidences of ill-will on both sides. With the Brownlows, to be a Fairleigh was to be all that was deceitful or dishonest—and, of course, the opposite views prevailed with the Fairleighs. But Cupid shot his golden darts regardless of family feuds, which it will be seen eventually brought about a reconciliation.

A warm attachment had early been formed between the Squire's youngest daughter and Philip Fairleigh, which time served only to strengthen. As a union between these modern Montagues and Capulets was "a consummation devoutly *not* to be wished," of course this tender passion was

nipped in the bud; and when Philip left the farm to engage in mercantile pursuits in the city, it was regarded as certain that he would soon forget his old love amid the more exciting scenes of the new life. But they misjudged their son, for Annie's pretty face followed him even through the perplexing accounts of debit and credit, and he could as soon forget his very existence as the dear one he had left in tears; and when at length he returned and announced his purpose to wed this will-o'-the-wisp that allured his mind from his books, he was met by an emphatic denial from his prospective father-in-law, and by equally marked disapproval from his own family. But in spite of all opposition the young people effected a union, which aroused the parental anger to its highest pitch, and they were informed that all natural ties were henceforth severed—in short, that the door was forever closed to them.

It was the memory of the absent one that caused the troubled look to rest upon the usually smiling countenance of the Squire, for the busy preparations going on about him had laid a train of tender, far-reaching thought. His heart was far away in the home of the daughter he had wished never again to see. He missed her lively presence from these preparations, in which she had delighted to participate in other years. He wondered if she would not come—if she thought of the united family at home this Christmas day. His heart seemed to reproach him for his

hasty action, but the old nature was yet too strong for this tender feeling, and his bitter hatred of the name she had taken gained the ascendancy. Yet the desire to see his child was ever present, and the serious look and stifled sigh did not escape the keen eye of his wife, who readily guessed the reason of this secret despondency.

"You don't seem like yourself to-night," she said, as he stood looking away over the moonlit fields. "Has anything gone wrong with the farm? I'm afraid you worry too much about that mortgage on the south meadow. Or are we going to lose Brindle, after all?"

This piece of quizzing had the desired effect. The Squire had thought his troubled manner unobserved, and this notice of his perturbation caused him to forget the sternness of manner he invariably assumed when speaking of the daughter who had defied his authority and obeyed the dictates of her own heart.

"No, there's nothing wrong with the farm," he said petulantly. "That mortgage has been paid off this three months, and Brindle is as lively as a two-year-old. But, oh! wife"—and he hesitated as if about to check himself—"there's something wrong with my heart! I've been thinking all day about Annie; and the more I think, the more I long to have her home again. I was thinking that maybe I was too hasty in doing as I did, and that I ought to forgive her. But"—the old spirit coming again—

“she married a Fairleigh, and that deserves no forgiveness!”

“Yes, husband,” returned his wife, “you were too severe in your punishment. It will break her young heart if she cannot come again to the old home. And it is all wrong to cherish this hard feeling against a neighbor. Does not the commandment tell us to love our neighbor? Besides, Philip Fairleigh never did you any harm, and why should you seek to make him and ours unhappy? We are growing old now, and it’s time to end this foolish quarrel ere it is transmitted to another generation.”

Dame Brownlow had never spoken so forcibly before, and her earnest tone added increased lustre to the forgiving flame that burned on his heart’s altar. True the son had done him no harm, and was it right to bear an implacable hatred against one who never sought his injury? And he was growing old: he had not thought much of that. His heart still retained the buoyancy of vigorous manhood, and the approach of time had been so imperceptible as to leave no impression on his mind; even though the keen sickle was ready to snap asunder the silver cord, he had never before realized how frail was his hold on life. Perhaps he might never again see the dear one he had banished from home—and would she greet him as of old in the life everlasting?

•

Once again his gaze wandered far away over the snow-clad hills, as if watching for her coming, and once more

his thoughts reverted to the long journey to the city. Yet he would not yield to his heart's promptings, and the still, small voice was again hushed in silence by the louder murmurs of the old passion; but at times he would feel this new power returning, filling his heart with a strange spirit of forgiveness he had seldom known before.

Meanwhile, at the Fairleigh farm there were also busy preparations for Christmas, and here, too, they longed for the return of the prodigal; and a message had been sent into the "far country," bidding him return again to the paternal roof. The united entreaties of the family had been brought to bear, and the rough old farmer had yielded to the assaults of the fair enemy; and so the fatted calf had been killed, and all made merry to welcome the prodigal's return from the husks of the commercial field.

* * * * *

Christmas eve at Brownlow farm—one of those early-darkening nights in which the day seems to steal silently away through the gathering shadows. A gentle snow fall had commenced and all nature was fast donning the ermine robes of winter, shrouding the gaunt-limbed elms in "a silence deep and white." There had been numerous arrivals during the day, and to-night the old house resounded with the merry laughter of its guests, as they engaged in the games and pastimes peculiar to rural life, while the little ones looked forward with childish expectancy to the good things the morrow held in store.

It was indeed a season to be long remembered, for many of this united race might never again meet at the homestead so dear to memory; while some, undoubtedly, would take their final farewell. The paths of life diverge from one common centre, but those who trace the lines do not always find their way back to the oft-remembered starting point; and thus many a traveller sets out upon the high-road to fame and fortune, only to become lost amid the winding labyrinths of the world, and nevermore return to home and kindred. Truly, these occasions that serve to unite the long severed should not be suffered to become obsolete calendar days.

But all this hilarity and good feeling could not dispel the gloomy look that lingered yet on Squire Brownlow's face: his heart was far away from this scene of mirth and gaiety. Even when roguish Will or Tom had clambered on his knee for a ride to Banbury Cross, or some flaxen-haired little fairy had twined around Grandpa's neck, the smile that appeared was only a momentary one. He was thinking more of the child of a few short years ago, whom perhaps he would never see again.

He had eagerly watched each arrival during the day; but, though he warmly greeted the many welcome ones, he failed to see among them the looked-for face.

As the twilight deepened into long, dark shadows, he quietly found his way to the deserted kitchen, where he

could be alone with his thoughts ; and, seated by the bright old hearth, he gave himself up to a seeming endless reverie, the flickering shadows assuming fantastical shapes in his troubled brain.

Soon he fell into a gentle slumber, and in dreamland was again united with his darling. He heard once more the musical ring of childish laughter in the blossoming clover, and saw the little arms outstretched to meet him.

Now she had grown to beautiful girlhood, and was the joy of his declining years. And then he dreamed she had come back to him, as he waited for her sad and lonely—and he felt a kiss imprinted on his cheek.

The spell was broken ;—but was he dreaming? No ! it could not be ; the warm, moist touch of loving lips still thrilled his senses, and he was now fully awake and no longer in the land of shadows. Was it possible for an inhabitant of the spirit world to revisit this earth ? Then she was dead, and had returned to kiss her cruel old father. But he would meet her again in the other life, and—

“Father !” * * * “Annie !—child.”

No, it was no idle fancy of the brain. Close to his heart he held the dear form he had seen in the shadow land, and experienced the keen enjoyment of hope that ends in fruition.

“Forgive me, father,” she said, “for this intrusion. But Philip’s folks have invited us to spend Christmas, and I

have come to see the dear old home once more. I did not mean to be seen,—but when I found you here, as if waiting for me to return, I knew you had not forgotten your wayward little girl.”

Forgotten her! Had he not watched and waited for her coming these many weary months? No, he had never forgotten her.

“It is I that should be forgiven,” he returned, “for my foolish pride and self-willed obstinacy. But I will make amends by ending this old feud that has made us all unhappy. Yes, I’ll have the Fairleighs down here to-morrow, if they will come, and we’ll hear no more about separating young hearts because of family quarrels.”

And he was as good as his word. Farmer Fairleigh very sensibly embraced this opportunity for a mutual reconciliation, and accepted the cordial invitation to be present.

What a change this Christmas day had wrought! All former animosities were forgotten amid the interchange of kindly greetings, and a happier company never met around the festal board. And it had been the connecting link between these disunited lives, drawing them into closer union with each other. Squire Brownlow was the jovial old soul of former days, and seemed never so happy as when with his newly-found children. The temporary separation had only endeared his child to him, and now he was pleased

to find she possessed the true Brownlow spirit, and had the courage to perform what she conceived to be her duty.

Ah! how short-lived was the determination of these old Romans to go on forgetting to the end of the chapter; it had yielded to that mysterious power which exerts such an influence upon mankind, and keeps our human passions within due bounds. For were our natures callous to this finer sentiment pervading the soul, the petty jars of life would open an ever-widening breach between those connected by even the most sacred ties.

“And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love,
And kiss again with tears.”



LITTLE ANNETTE.

NNETTE Barclay stood watching her father's schooner from the long Breakwater, till it became a mere speck out on the ocean, and was no longer to be distinguished from the other sails low down on the horizon.

The freshening gales blowing over the harbor played at will among the long tresses blown in wild confusion around her slender form, and many were the kindly glances from rough-bearded men in their uncouth fishing boats that turned to the lithe figure on the quay.

Twilight came so imperceptibly as to be hardly noticed, till the lights of red and green gleaming from vessels in the harbor admonished her that it was time to return.

The great, blinking eye of the lighthouse on the headland now opened and closed with its usual regularity, and to Annette it seemed like some giant winking out over the dark waters; while across the harbor the city seemed a mass of twinkling light, dancing and flickering above the tall, dark masts huddled together in the docks.

Young as she was, Annette was not insensible to the mystic influence of the time, and did not soon forget her

walk home through the gloom and darkness of this June evening.

Poor Annette! She wondered if life were so lonely to every one at thirteen as it seemed to her,—and if it would always be the same. In her childish way she had conjured up bright scenes far different from this dreary existence in which she had been placed, till day by day a desire for something better—she did not know what—unfolded itself to her young mind.

To be sure, Jasper Barclay was as kind and good to her as his rough nature would admit, and she loved him dearly; but since her mother died, she had often been left alone days and nights together in the cottage by the shore, till the hoarse cry of the gulls and the sighing and sobbing of the sea, as she lay awake at night, had grown to be weird and mournful. It seemed at times as if her young heart would break with this strange passion, were it not that nature came to her relief with silent, kindly tears.

“Bide thy time, little lass, bide thy time,” her father would say, when childish questions could no longer be evaded, “and mayhap my Annette will be a grand lady some o’ these days,” and in his rough but kindly way he would draw her closer to him, and seek to read in the clear depths of blue the thoughts of her busy little brain.

“But I don’t want to be a grand lady!” Annette would say on such occasions. “I only want to know something

beside these sandy shores, and the big blue waves curling and dashing against the rocks. Often, when asleep, I dream I'm in—oh! such a nice place, way, way off from the sea, where they don't have shipwrecks nor storms. But when somebody sings to me, and the air is full of music, I wake up to find myself all alone, and I hear the wind and storm. And sometimes, father, it seems to me then as if I could hear voices crying for help down in the surf!"

"It be the fairies, lass—that's all. Many a time they have fetched my Annette to me, when the sea was breakin' over us and the rocks was near. But I could see thee beckon us away from the storm, till we sailed into a great still river, where there was flowers, and trees, and birds, and little brooks singin' over mossy stones. It be the fairies, lass, it be the fairies."

Thus he would, in his own simple way, attribute the phantasies of sleep to the subtle influence of Queen Mab, and strive to break the monotony of the storm without by singing some rollicking sea song about "a lass that loved a sailor," or draw a succession of jigs and hornpipes from his fiddle, till Annette forgot her loneliness, and danced and sang like the fairies about which he was so fond of telling her.

A month had now elapsed since Annette's visit to the Breakwater, but she well remembered that long, lonely walk home to the cottage, under the twinkling stars, and amid the chirping of the crickets in the meadow grass.

She was glad that June with its roses had come again, for it seemed to her that she was happier when the flowers were in bloom. Her bush was full of lovely, double roses, and she saw with childish delight that the honeysuckles were climbing down from their perch over the window, and slowly gaining a foothold among the rosebuds, for she loved to see their dewy petals peeping through the green leaves.

She often thought of her father, and wondered if he had forgotten her, while she stood watching the white sails till they seemed lost in the dark clouds resting on the sea. How lonely it seemed for him to be going away, and no one to say good-bye but little Annette.

Annette, during Barclay's trip to the Banks, passed much of her time at the cottage of Duncan Carrick, the light-keeper. Duncan's cottage had no roses growing near it, and in stormy weather, when the sea broke at the base of the ledge and sent the spray flying against the windows, she thought it a dismal place to stay. But the keeper's wife was very kind to her, and she loved their baby with a child's idolatry, so that she was very happy at the light-house; and on nights when it looked like a storm she would stay with Mrs. Carrick and the baby for company, as at these times Duncan was absent from his family attending to the lanterns in the tower.

On the day of the great storm of June 19, 18—, which brought desolation to many a fisherman's dwelling, Annette

went over to the cottage early in the afternoon. The sky was dark and threatening, as when a thunder storm is brewing, and the sea beat itself wildly against the cliffs, rolling in waves of prodigious size crowned with their ominous white caps.

Towards evening the storm so long impending broke over them. At intervals the dull, heavy sound of the thunder would come booming over the water, and soon the storm burst with all its fury, while the lightnings followed their zigzag course through the heavens.

Strange as it may seem in one so young, Annette loved to see these battles of the elements, for there was something mysteriously grand in watching the bright flashes dart from black clouds and fight their way through the stormy skies, till at length they leaped with a hissing noise into the troubled waters, and the thunder could be heard chasing them away among the dark caverns of the deep.

But the sea was ever whispering its great secrets in her ear, and it was from this she longed to be freed. Whether in the night, when the waves were tossed and tumbled by the wind, or when she was playing by the shore, and they rolled peacefully in over the white sands, they told the selfsame story of wrecks and deaths on some stormy coast. Even the pink and white sea-shells echoed the sad refrain, till in them she heard the breakers and the storm,

and voices from the sea that were calling "Annette! Annette!"

"There's a wreck near the Junk o' Pork!" said the young lightkeeper excitedly, "and I'm goin' down to the shore. Maybe I can tell the life-boat crew where to steer."

After kissing his wife and child, Duncan hurriedly left the cottage, leaving them alone with Annette. The baby, frightened by the storm, began to cry lustily, and its mother crooned him a little song as she rocked to and fro.

Annette ran to a window and peered intently out into the darkness. Her keen young eyes, now rendered strangely bright by a sudden fear, seemed piercing the blackness that overshadowed the sea. She had caught a glimpse of the wreck, as a flash of lightning illumined the water, but it was instantly hidden from sight by the heavy sea breaking over it.

The lighthouse threw its friendly beams far out on the water, but as the wreck had not yet reached the circle of light the life crew, aroused by Duncan's warning, could not see the ship or render any help. The brave fellows were struggling in the surf, though it was madness to pull their boat into the breakers with the sea rolling to such a height.

A wild cry startled Mrs. Carrick and echoed through the cottage. It came from Annette, who had opened the window and was leaning far out so she could look down

into the yawning sea below the cliff, unmindful of the storm that now raged so fiercely.

In the illumination of the scene that preceded a terrific thunder clap, Annette had recognized the wreck as her father's schooner. This recognition was more intuitive than otherwise—but it was true. Among the little group of fishermen on the wreck the tall figure of Jasper Barclay, standing bravely at his wheel, was strikingly prominent.

Annette, heedless of Mrs. Carrick's attempts to soothe her, watched for the ship as it neared the lighthouse. It was pitiful to see the agony depicted on her sweet young face, as she reverentially knelt and prayed. If ever a petition winged its way to heaven, it was the prayer of little Annette. Suddenly the beacon shining out over the rocky shore was extinguished in a flash, and intense darkness enshrouded the scene.

"Oh, Annette!—the light!" cried the keeper's wife, "the wind has broken the window in the tower!" The cottage stood near the lighthouse, and she could see from there that all was dark.

Out into the storm darted Annette—across the intervening space—till she reached the lighthouse.

No thought of fear, no dread of voices in the sea, harassed her now. This child, whose love of a rough, kind father, was the passion of her life, was to-night the soul of heroism.

One impulse alone led her on through the tempest—to

light the great lantern in the tower and save the wreck till the life-boat reached it. She knew where Duncan kept his matches, as she often played in the lighthouse, and had seen him light the lantern at dusk.

So up the creaking ladder that led to the tower Annette bravely climbed. She seemed insensible to fear, for once the cold wing of a sea-gull, that had taken refuge in the lighthouse from the storm, brushed against her face, but she made no outcry as she continued upward.

At last she reached the top and fearlessly stepped upon the narrow platform surrounding the lantern. The storm shook the structure to the very foundations, and it seemed as if the old lighthouse would topple into the sea. Annette felt the salty wind that came through the broken window, which had caused the light to go out. She knew that unless she could keep the wind out there would be little use in trying to light the lantern. By the faint blaze of the matches, which often were extinguished by the wind, she groped her way to the window, and into the broken pane fixed the shawl that Mrs. Carrick had thrown about her shoulders when leaving the cottage.

And soon out over the dangerous shore burst a great flood of light, shining through the storm and guiding the life-boat toward the wreck. The lines were thrown, words of encouragement from those on the beach reached the drowning men, and one after another—till only the skipper

remained on the sinking wreck—they were pulled through the surf in safety. Barclay, inured as he was to danger, felt no fear as he plunged into the sea with a rope around his waist. He was a powerful swimmer, and a few vigorous strokes would bring him to the boat. But a huge wave breaking over him, he was borne with crushing force against the crags, and when he, too, was taken into the boat, there was a consciousness that Jasper Barclay had been fatally injured.

When Duncan, the keeper, returned to the lighthouse, he found a childish form lying white and still near the ladder by which the lantern was reached, with a crimson stream slowly oozing from under her tangled tresses; and the light fell upon a pale, upturned face, now as motionless as sculptured marble, yet wearing that same fragile beauty which in life had moved all hearts to a love of little Annette.

* * * * *

The morning broke in all the unclouded beauty of June, and it was hard to realize that the night had been so terrible. The sea was now one great expanse of rippling blue, with here and there a white sail to relieve this monotony of color, save where the dense foliage of the islands in the bay gave a greenish cast to the waves, on which the sunlight wrought its various phenomena of light and shade. But there lingered yet in the air a perceptible trace of the

commotion caused by the storm, noticeable even in the tremulous notes of the birds, as if they were afraid their noisy twitterings would awake the slumbering elements.

Yet not the beauty of the morning, nor the busy hum of life that filled the air, brought happiness to the cottage where Jasper Barclay lay suffering beneath a double sorrow.

HIS own Annette, the pride and joy of his lonely existence, the one idol of his thoughts in whom centered every good resolve, had sacrificed her young life to appease the fury of the deep. In the old lighthouse, with the waves dashing against its trembling base, and amid the murmurs of the storm, her spirit had gone forth to meet the voices that were ever calling from the sea.

The news of her tragic death spread far and near, and many visitors called during the day. Her father told, with simple pride, the story of the light going out when the storm was at its height, and how Annette had gone into the darkness to return no more in life. The ordeal had been too great for her delicate nature, and when she had succeeded in lighting the great lantern in the tower, the reaction of the excitement which enabled her to brave the storm caused her to fall from the ladder—and the cruel, sharp stones in the wall had pierced her brain.

They buried Annette by the side of her mother, and away from the sobbing murmur of the sea that had vexed her in life; for Barclay thought she would rather lie where

the flowers would grow upon her little grave, and where the birds were happiest in their carolings through the long summer days.

The death of Annette was a heavy blow to Barclay, and day by day a change for the worst could be noticed.

"It will soon be over," he said one day to Duncan. "My heart's in the grave with Annette, and I don't want to live no longer. She comes to me when I'm asleep, with her little hands filled with flowers; and I can feel her warm kisses on my cheeks, like as when she was a pretty lass at my knee."

To all questions concerning the future he made but one reply. His was the simple faith that leads to immortality, rejecting the conflicting creeds that make the path of life so devious, and finding a never-failing grace in the love of a wise Creator. And no argument to the contrary could convince him that his angel Annette was not waiting to welcome his coming.

A day or two later Barclay had another of his "bad spells," as the doctor called them, and grew more delirious. His eyes had already assumed that far off, longing expression indicative of death, and remained fixed on the little window where the roses were nodding in the sunshine, as if watching for Annette to look in as she did in life.

The next night, as the village clock slowly, solemnly tolled the hour, he counted the measured strokes, and said to those who watched over him:

“’Leven o’clock, mates! One hour more, an’ the tide
’ill be on its ebb.”

They thought his mind was wandering back to the sea, and gave no heed to this remark. But when midnight, weird and lonely, echoed from the distant steeple over the water, the soul of Jasper Barclay drifted out with the tide—away to the havens of eternal peace.

In the old cemetery, amid the dark pines, three grassy mounds lie side by side. No stones now mark the larger ones; but, hidden by the long, tangled grass, a small white tablet tells who sleeps beneath the tiny mound. It is the grave of little Annette.



H U L D A H.

"Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean;
 Where some refulgent sunset of India
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
 And, crimson-hued, the stately palm woods
 Whisper in odorous heights of even."

—Tennyson.

"Q^H, how you startled me, you naughty boy!" And
 a shrill, girlish scream, mingled with the sudden crashing
 of the bushes, broke the silence that had brooded over the
 "haunted dell"—a lonely yet picturesque spot on the
 Mahahlah river; where the woods are sombre even at noon-
 tide; where the river becomes turbulent as it hurries on to
 the sea, abounding in dangerous currents that form a
 whirlpool below; and where, upon a summer's day, I love
 to watch the white clouds drifting heavenward and list
 "the brooks of Eden mazily murmuring."

An August afternoon in the woods should partake of the
 spirit of a dreamy, idyllic sort of existence—akin to that of

the golden age, where man needed not to take thought of a care laden to-morrow. Unless it can lay claim to this in a greater or less degree, it is not a real, old fashioned afternoon at all. But with the time in question no such fault could, in all fairness, be found; it was an August afternoon of the most pronounced type, pervaded by a quietude that reigned in undisturbed serenity.

And seated by the swiftly flowing Mahahlah, within the shade of a tangled growth of shrubbery that shut out the sun—and which formed as fair a bower as any in fabled Tintagil, where Queen Isolt solaced her weary heart with hopes that crept up from a twilight sea—Huldah Stratton, the village teacher, gave herself up to the pleasant phantasy of a day dream, with half closed eyes that scarcely saw the bright water beyond, as she reclined with one cheek resting on her hand. But her brain was active, though bodily sense was languid and tired.

If this girl had been offered a penny for her thoughts, very likely she would have told you, with a roguish smile, they were not worth even that trifling sum. Huldah had a way of smiling that gave an appearance of roguishness often when she was the least in a happy mood. There were oh! such serious moments in her life at times, and yet one who did not know her well, or in some measure share her confidence, would never think that Huldah Stratton cherished aspirations for anything above a country school

teacher, content to drudge through life as the servant of every district in which her lot was cast. And as for getting married—why, nobody ever, to my knowledge, thought such a thing likely to happen. She cared nothing for the village beaux, beyond yielding them an occasional walk or drive; and then her keen insight into human nature, coupled with a habit of lashing their many failings, as if she were punishing a stubborn boy at school, soon chilled any budding hopes of winning Huldah's affections, and left her free to pursue her studies at the Parks farm, a pleasant home two miles from Winhampton, where she had lived since coming into the district.

Village gossips asserted, and not without truth, that most girls who taught the little red school on the hill turned out to be old maids. Why, then, should Huldah Stratton be a notable exception? they reasoned.

But Huldah was young and pretty, wasn't she? Y-e-s, she was both of these. So were the others young—possibly surpassingly pretty—once. Yet those who said that Huldah, although she had only reached her twenty-second year, was destined to be a maiden all forlorn, did not fully carry out the idea of the nursery rhyme, for they forgot that a "man all tattered and torn" might turn up some day and scatter their predictions to the four winds.

Ah! they little knew the true feelings, the inner emotions, the lofty aspirations, the grand hopes for the future,

that surged like a mighty tide through this girl's soul in moments of awakened fancy—flowing in and out among strange creations of the brain; receding from her again, till only long reaches of gray sand remained; and then the ebb would come, bearing upon its bosom an argosy of hopes, only to be wrecked and strewn along the shore.

So Huldah waited and watched by the sea. She built castles that reached the blue empyrean, but they tumbled down in ruins. Very sensibly, too, she kept her own counsels, or whispered them only to the goddess of the moon. But she knew the tides were ever flowing around the earth. And while night followed day, and the hours waxed and waned, and the stars and planets came with the eventide, why should she not hope that some day her ship would find its haven?

"I beg your pardon, miss," a pleasant voice said, following Huldah's startled exclamation in the opening of the story. "This sudden intrusion, as you doubtless see for yourself, comes of my falling over the hedge."

He was careful to conceal the fact that at the time of his tumble he was trying to catch a glimpse of her face unobserved, having seen her as he crossed a log over the river some distance above.

"But of course I'm a 'naughty boy,' as you have said," he went on, "and old enough to know better!"

Huldah was on her feet in an instant, while a deep crim-

son blush mounting neck and face made her look charmingly pretty, and told of maidenly embarrassment. Hastily smoothing back her auburn tresses, which during the reverie by the river had fallen in unconfined luxuriance about her shoulders, she turned to meet the speaker.

His voice was one of exquisite modulation, calm, undisturbed by the accident, and Huldah felt well disposed toward him. He was a perfect stranger, but, while dextrously slipping a hairpin where it would do the greatest service, she found time to place his age nearer thirty than twenty, and thought him very handsome.

"Oh, I thought it was Linky," she replied, "and didn't mean to be rude," noticing that he was smiling at her evident perplexity of manner.

A feeling of pity for him soon dispelled all curiosity as to who he was, from whence he came, or whither he was going. She saw he was in need of such aid as even a girl can render. This gentleman, who had so suddenly been literally hurled into her sphere of existence, was some sportsman in quest of an afternoon's trout along the stream. Her natural Yankee instinct of guessing told her this; but a bamboo rod, broken into three pieces, was conclusive evidence. In his fall an ankle was sprained, and his face and clothes were torn by the bushes. Surely this was the man all tattered and torn! But had he come to awaken new longings in Huldah's heart, and lead her into

the world where great possibilities wait but to elude ambition's grasp?

"Who is Linky?" he asked; in such a droll way, too, that Huldah gave vent to a little laugh, which had the effect of putting her much at ease.

"I had forgotten you didn't know Linky," she replied. "His name is Lincoln Parks, and he is one of my scholars, but everybody here calls him Linky. He went up the river to fish, and as he is always playing tricks, I thought he was trying to frighten me."

"But you are suffering, sir," she continued, in a voice full of sympathy. "Isn't there something I can do to help you? Your face is bleeding. I will get some water."

"Only a slight abrasion of the skin, I think. But—oh!—ah!—yes, confound it! Excuse me, but I've sprained my left ankle rather severely."

"Then I will go for help at once. Oh, I wonder what's keeping Linky. I'll run up to the meadow—perhaps he's there.

In a moment she would have been off on this errand, but he bade her stay with him.

"Now, don't be frightened. You will do just as well as the boy—yes, better. And now lend me your hand, till I get on my feet."

Huldah unhesitatingly put her shapely brown hands in his, which were much whiter and evidently unused to heavy work.

The slender, girlish form seemed possessed of wonderful strength, under the stimulus of excitement. She tugged and pulled with a will, but the injured ankle needed tender care, and at last, by putting both her plump arms around his waist, she fairly lifted the gentleman to his feet, which position he maintained by grasping a low bough above his head.

"There!" she cried, exultingly. "I knew I could lift you up."

"Yes," he replied, with a smile, "when a woman will, she *will*, you know. And I thank you very—"

Their period of self-congratulation was brief. Snap! went the rotten limb overhead, and with a sharp cry of pain he fell in a dead faint on the ground, while Huldah bent over him in great trepidation.

Only for a moment was she undecided how to act. During her career as teacher she had seen many of her scholars taken with fainting spells, and with admirable coolness had always applied the means at her command. Water, she knew, was needed to bring back a glow of health to the pale features now resting upon her lap.

The river was not far away, though the banks were precipitous and she could not easily clamber down to the stream. But she remembered there was a cool well up in the meadow, because Linky had that very afternoon fetched her a refreshing draught from it in the tin cup that now reposed within a small willow basket filled with berries.

Huldah and Linky, with whose parents she lived, had improved this half holiday to go berrying together. The girl loved to roam through these grand old woods, or wander across the meadow to where the river went rippling on to the sea, and Linky seemed never so happy as when she asked him to go with her.

In one way or another the boy was always anticipating some new pleasure for his young teacher, and in return Huldah took a warm interest in Linky's welfare, so that between them there existed, in some measure, an interchange of ideas, of affections, and even a sense of dependence upon one another. If a new sorrow appeared within the narrow circle of Linky's boyhood, Huldah was the first to whom he went for comfort, and he was always sure of finding in her that sympathy and kindly help which to a boy is more than worldly treasure.

So, too, with Huldah. Whatever favor she might desire at Linky's hands was cheerfully granted; and in more ways than one, she found, could the boy be of help to her. The intervals between school hours left but a small part of the day she could call her own, but as these few crumbs from the loaf of time were swept together by her careful hand, she was possessed of a fund of leisure which a person less prudent could never accumulate.

It was the old story of Dives and Lazarus, only distinguished by a different application of the parable. Lazarus

hungered for the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; but Huldah longed—and oh, how wistfully—for the days and weeks that others frittered away in idleness, when she saw those around her who had such golden opportunities for success.

Should you ask why Huldah Stratton found the drudgery of teaching a country school distasteful to her, my answer must be that she no longer regarded this work as filling the measure of her hopes; there were higher branches on the tree of knowledge which she aspired to reach. And yet she was much too conscientious to think justice could now be done her scholars, when the mind was disposed to wander in more alluring fields.

* * * *

“Jee-whiz! Miss Huldah, what's happened?” There stood the much-wanted Linky, with a string of fish in one hand, and in the other the blackest, sorriest looking crow that ever pilfered a farmer's corn, which some sportsman had shot through the wing and Linky had captured on a stone wall. Had Huldah been placed in a less serious position, she would have laughed outright at his comical appearance.

“Oh, never mind now,” she said excitedly, “but take the dipper from the basket and fetch me some water. And be quick about it, Linky, won't you? Now, *don't* stop to ask any questions.”

“Yes, but what'll I do with my crow?” asked the boy, not wishing to lose his prize.

"Oh, Lincoln Parks!" said Huldah impatiently, "you are the most exasperating little sinner alive. Bother your old crow! What good is it, anyway?"

"Lots of good—sure," said Linky stoutly. "I'm goin' to cut his tongue, and make a poll parrot out'n him."

"Then give me the dipper—and I'll get the water. But remember, Linky, if I am drowned in the river, you're to blame!"

This speech had the desired effect upon the boy. Hastily clapping the wounded crow under his hat, and placing thereon a stone, he at once started for the river and returned a few minutes later with the dipper filled with water.

Gently did Huldah bathe the high, white forehead and pale, tensely drawn features of the injured man. With nature's restorative, cold and sparkling from the stream, she felt confident of her ability to manage the case.

The minutes seemed like hours, as they dragged themselves along. She heard a bird singing in the big elm in low, tremulous tones, when the accident happened; but now all was still—above, below, around—and the bird had flown away. Save her whispered instructions to Linky, who was vigorously chafing the gentleman's palms, she heard no sound but the river gurgling over its pebbly bed. Huldah grew fretful at her patient's delay in regaining consciousness—but then we are, by nature, creatures of impatience.

If I were asked to give an instance of genuine patience, there would arise a strong temptation to cite the history of a literary friend, who, young vivacious, talented, and of many lovable qualities of heart, is unhappily deprived of all outward contact with life. The world is seen only in shadowy outlines, dim and half remembered, as from the mirror of memory is flashed for an instant some scene of happier days. But no complaining tone is heard, no voice of lamentation arises in the land, for in dark and trying hours the great lesson of patience was learned. Like the Lady of Shallott, this young poetess weaves into warp and woof the shadows that flit across her brain; and dull must be the eye that cannot find therein the lowly flower, the stately forest, the strong light of morning, the mellow beauty of the sunset hour, the tender beam of "softly shining stars," blended in delicate textures of thought and sentiment.

A low, long-drawn sigh from the stranger's lips told of his return to a conscious state. Eagerly did the girl listen, with her face close to his, for a repetition of the sound, for she knew that when his breathing became strong and natural there was really no danger. He opened his eyes, and smiled into the fair face so near his own; he told her not to be frightened, as he felt much better.

"Jee-whiz! mister," broke in Linky, "I thought you was dead—sure. I'm glad you aint, all the same—coz it

might skeer Huldý. But I'll git Dad to come down with the hoss. He's makin' a fence in the medder, and I won't be gone a minute."

Farmer Parks was in the meadow when Linky, hatless and breathless, arrived there, and he promptly went to the scene of the accident.

"I trust you will pardon my question," said the stranger while they waited for the team, "but tell me are you not Huldah Stratton? The boy—Linky—calls you Huldý. And by the way, my name is Bramhall—Hilliard Bramhall, your most devoted servant, for such kindness as yours merits devotion."

"Pray do not speak of it, sir—Mr. Bramhall. Your gratitude alone is sufficient; and is it not our duty to help one another? Yes, I am Huldah Stratton. But how you, a stranger in Winhampton, should know of me, I do not understand."

"Beauty, my dear Miss Stratton, is its own bright herald. Like some lovely flower beside the stream, it may bloom unnoticed by the world—yet the very winds whisper its dwelling place."

"Your failings lean toward flattery," answered Huldah with much spirit. "And frankly, sir, I do not care for adulation."

Hilliard Bramhall, clever man of the world as he was, smarted beneath this stinging blow. Yet he would not

let this country girl, who knew so little of the world and its ways, see that her honest speech had disturbed his temper. His experience with women had led him to think them all alike in a fondness for flattery; and here, he thought, was one invulnerable to all assaults. And in one brief moment Huldah, whom he had compared to a lowly blossom, came nearer his ideal of womanhood than any he had met before.

There was, after all, a touch of sentiment in what he said that secretly pleased Huldah Stratton. Show me the girl of twenty-two who does not like to be called pretty, and these wondering eyes will look upon a rarity!

"Your pardon, Miss Stratton, for I did not mean to flatter. Sympathy such as you have given me is deserving of more chivalrous regard. Unfortunately, I have the habit of saying little pleasantries in an original way; and you are not, I hope, offended because I have used a flowery metaphor to express myself. But certainly truth and justice will bear me out. Beautiful you are, and deserving of the name. Why, I have been a guest at the Elms only a day, and your name has been on the lips of cousin Therese a dozen times."

The Elms being the residence of Judge Nathan Jerrie, whose daughter Therese was Huldah's most intimate friend among the girls of the village, she readily divined that this was the cousin she had often heard of when visiting there.

He had graduated with medical honors at Bowdoin, and having means for travel, spent the following two years abroad, preparing himself by close study to share his father's practice in the city. Upon his return home he contracted a violent fever, from which he had recovered some months ago, and was now passing a few weeks at his uncle's country home.

"Oh, indeed," said Huldah, "then you are the cousin of my dearest friend. So I readily forgive you"—placing her hand in his outstretched palm. "And here comes the wagon now. Mr. Parks will assist you to the Elms, where your friends are."

"But I shall see you again, of course?" he asked.

"Oh, I hope so—when your foot gets well. Then you can come with Therese to see my scholars. Or perhaps you would like, as you are from the city, to visit us at the farm?"

"A duty I shall gladly perform," was his earnest reply. And, amid an exchange of good-byes, farmer Parks drove off to the village. Huldah, who was strangely happy and knew not why, soon took the homeward path, while Linky patiently trudged on behind with his string of fish and the wounded crow.

The days glided rapidly down the bright stream of time. September had passed her sister months, and now kept stately on toward autumnal glories. Winhampton, and

neighboring villages up the Mahahlah, took on the garb of loveliness, and a more typical New England scene, rich in its variety of midsummer beauty, it would be difficult to find.

Hilliard Bramhall, now that his ankle was strong again, became a veritable Pantheist among the temples of nature, and daily worshipped at their shrines. As a physician, he took an interest in whatever might advance his profession, and carefully noted the kind influence of this rugged country life upon himself. He found here those priceless boons, health and happiness—jewels fit for a king, were every other gem lost from his crown; for of what avail are kingly prerogatives when the heart is sad, and pain is regnant over bodily sense, and contending forces within us battle for supremacy?

Huldah, too, found new pleasure in the time. These early autumn days were so filled with pensive beauty, so exquisitely colored with variegated hues, that she wished to enjoy them in all their fullness.

Morning and evening, on her way to and from the school, the walk through fragrant meadows, across the sparkling stream, over breezy uplands affording a view of the sea beyond, was indeed delightful.

Linky was always at her beck and call, but as she chose to indulge in reveries she seldom conversed with him. The boy often wondered what engrossed her thoughts, but

amused himself as only boyhood can—chasing the squirrels from tree to tree, throwing stones at saucy wood-peckers on the fence rails, or picking wild flowers to adorn Huldah's desk at school.

Doctor Bramhall frequently joined her at the stile near the village, and walked home with her to the farm. At first these were apparently chance meetings, as he appeared like Nimrod with a fowling gun under his arm, but finally they took place as a matter of course. They sometimes met at the Elms with Therese, and really became dear friends, while as yet no flicker of the tender flame betrayed any inward emotions. But as still waters run the deepest, so the affections, in like manner, may ripple calmly on because of the depths in which they flow.

One quiet afternoon, however, as they walked by the river, came that sudden confession which she trembled to hear. Rather singularly, too, they were now in the haunted dell, where their acquaintance was so romantically formed. The sun was sinking behind the distant woods, flooding stream, meadow and forest with its beautiful light, and they stopped here to admire the sunset.

"Huldah," said he, taking his place by her side, "do you remember the song we sang that moonlight night upon the river?"

"Yes, perfectly well. It is called 'Only in Dreams,' and was written by a friend of Therese, who sent her the

manuscript. I remember how you rowed the boat so as to keep time with the music. Listen, and I will sing you the first stanza."

Only in dreams must I dwell on thy beauty,
Lest from my heart gush its love-fevered streams;
And though we part at the stern call of duty,
Still wilt thou linger the queen of my dreams.
O dear one! though now from each other we sever,
The roses will bloom round thy pathway again;
But the bard that adores thee must wander forever,
In valleys of shadow, in silence and pain!

"That is the song I liked so well; thank you for singing it." His voice was low and tender, she noticed. And he had never called her Huldah before—not even when Therese was with them.

"Well, can you guess of what I am thinking, Huldah?"

"Oh, Doctor Bramhall, why should I? I am not versed in mind reading." The roguish light in her hazel eyes told him she was in one of her merry moods again.

"Perhaps my trouble is more intimately connected with the heart," he returned with well feigned gravity.

"And what can have happened to your heart, Doctor Bramhall?" was her naive question. "Therese is always joking you about having no heart."

"But seriously, though, I have. And since hearing that song I have wondered if it is wise to longer check its 'love-fevered streams.' Huldah, do you know I am going away to-morrow—perhaps to see you no more, only in dreams?"

"Why, no!"—in a startled way. "I thought you were going with us next week to Jockey Cap. And Therese tells me you have friends at Highland Park, too."

"Well—a letter received to-day has changed all that. It is pleasing to make plans, but I realize now how earnest is life."

"Yes, of course you know best. But I—we—Therese and all of us, will miss you so much." A tear trembled in her eye.

"Ah, but will you miss me?" came the sudden question. "For you must know I love you, Huldah—love you with all sincerity."

No, she had not known before; yet had dared to hope, in spite of herself, that he might some day love her as she did him. But reason whispered, "He is rich—you are poor; away with such fancies—they are but air!" And as a brave resolve came to her, she realized, alas! how true it was.

Doctor Bramhall, now that his passion for this country girl had plunged him into it, proved a finished love maker. Huldah found herself within a close embrace, and felt his ardent kisses upon her lips. She struggled for a moment in his arms, but it was like the fluttering of a frightened bird, that tries to escape from its gilded prison and then bursts forth in song. He only held her all the closer, while the melody of his voice seemed to her as the music of a dream.

"We have been very happy together," he continued, for the girl was silently crying, which he regarded as a good omen.

"Yes, very happy, Hilliard—Mr. Bramhall," between her broken sobs. "But you must let me go! I do not love you well enough to be your wife. Oh! I did not think of this—for, if I must tell you, my destiny is already decided upon." He chose to put a wrong construction upon her answer, and, thinking she had been only playing with him, he released her with sudden jealousy.

"You are cruel," he said bitterly. "I did not think you so. But a coquette you have proved. Ah! well, a pretty face—"

"Oh, don't, *don't* say that?" she pleaded. "Call me cruel—heartless—indiscreet, if you will—but not a coquette. You do not know what anguish this is, or surely you would spare me!"

"Forgive me, Huldah?" His voice was tender and sympathetic. "It is I who am cruel. And yet it is hard to give you up—my heart's first idol. Then there are earlier hopes? You have pledged yourself to the future!"

"Yes, earlier hopes—and I must be true." She was looking drearily over the meadows, as he stood with his arms folded before her.

"And may happiness crown your choice," he said. "But it is growing late, Miss Stratton; so we will say good-bye. I am going."

He took her hand a moment, then turned quickly homeward, leaving Huldah to wait for Linky. She thought he had left her forever, and a sharp pain shot through her heart as she recalled his coldness at parting. And when he had disappeared, she gave herself up to a paroxysm of grief.

"Oh, it is so cruel to let him go like this!" she sobbed. Her heart was filled to overflowing, and the tears would come, for nature has wisely ordained that the torrent of human suffering shall at times flow out from the overburdened spirit. At length she became alarmed at Linky's absence, and called his name without getting a reply. Above in the meadow she heard the faint tinkling of a cow bell, mingled with the lowing of the kine, and thinking he had gone after his cows she hastened home alone.

"Jee-whiz! what funny things girls is!" exclaimed Linky, emerging from his place of concealment. He had hidden behind the bushes to frighten them, and, without meaning to be a spy, was forced to see and hear all that had taken place between his friends.

* * * * *

I shall always believe that the good genii led Doctor Bramhall to visit the haunted dell that night; he seemed drawn there by some irresistible impulse, rather than of his own volition. This spot upon the Mahahlah was known by him as a famous trouting pool; where, under the shad-

ow of deep green foliage, he had passed many a quiet afternoon ensnaring the silvery trout; so it may be that the associations of the place, as he expected to leave the village in the morning, drew him once more to the dell.

And Huldah—what of her? He could not so steel his heart as to look upon these scenes again without one tender thought of the woman he had loved. Often they had loitered here by the river, and Huldah would nestle closer to his side, as if danger could not reach her while he was near, when the path grew hazardous and the dull roaring of the Mahahlah falls was heard. He thought of her now, or tried to think, as one dead to him. A few brief hours ago, love had held the lines of destiny; to-night his old, bitter pride was king.

He was, nevertheless, something of a philosopher. It would have been strange, too, if life had not shown him the value of clear thinking. The story of Socrates had impressed him deeply when a student; and more than once in his own life the hemlock of bitter experience had touched his lips. And so he sensibly decided to quaff the draught of oblivion now, for if Huldah Stratton loved another, as he believed she did, the better way was to tear her image from his heart.

Though he is my friend, candor compels the admission that he had run the gauntlet of many flirtations, and without danger of being impaled upon the matrimonial lance.

And the one thought that now vexed his spirit was the reflection that it had been reserved for this rustic beauty to pierce the only vulnerable point in his armor.

A woman, though the weaker vessel, is not infrequently the strongest when adverse currents beset love's devious course; so the feminine mind is quick to single out the object of a man's affections, among a limited number of friends. Doctor Bramhall realized this when alone with Therese that evening. He was moody, abstracted in manner, and so unlike himself that his cousin thought him ill.

Therese, being on terms of intimacy with Huldah, had guessed his secret, he felt sure; and yet, instead of availing himself of her sympathy and help, he foolishly practiced deception. But Therese, happy enough in her parents' love, refrained from meddling with the affairs of others.

Bed-time came, and one by one the village lights disappeared, but he was not in the mood for sleeping, and after leaving Therese with a cousinly kiss he went out for a late walk.

"Good night, Hilliard," she called from her window, as he passed through the garden. "And, oh! look here, chicken," she added, "you'd better not go down to the haunted dell, for you might see the ghosts to-night."

"I'm afraid you are growing superstitious, Therese," he laughingly replied. "And as for the place being haunted, my dear girl—surely you are not so credulous!"

"Oh, of course I'm not, you great goose! How dull you are not to understand me."

"Yes, cousin mine, I am a dull fellow to-night. The fact is, I'm not feeling well. I have a—a headache, that's all. But good-night and pleasant dreams. I'll not be very late—probably."

He noiselessly shut the gate, picked a lovely rose from her favorite bush, and, dropping into a brisk walk, was soon upon the brow of the hill.

The night was beautiful, with clear, starry skies and a crescent moon, while a faint breeze, laden with myriad scents, blew from seaward. At another time his contemplative soul might have found its Elysium amidst all this grandeur and loveliness. For he was of those who may exclaim, O sacred silence! manifold are thy blessings. He was alone it is true—and yet there is a proverb that "man is never less alone than when alone."

Below in the valley he saw the moonlit waters of the Mahahlah, looking so peaceful and bright that he descended the hill, thinking he would walk homeward through the meadow. It was darker in the valley, but the moon was rising above the tree tops, and he kept on towards the dell, leaving the slumbering village far behind.

"I am surely bewitched," he soliloquized, "or else Therese's ghosts have me in their power. Dear little girl—she, at least, wants to see me happy. But it does seem

ghostly down here, after all. I'll laugh, or do something to break the enchantment. Ha! ha! ha! Now I'll listen for the echo."

The echo came with startling distinctness from a point below on the river. A sepulchral voice echoed back "jee-whiz!" followed by a splash of some object falling into the water. He had half determined to retrace his steps when a crackling noise on the other side of the river was heard, as though some one coming down the path had stepped on a dry twig.

The Mahahlah at this point flows between two high ledges, over which, and serving as a foot bridge, is a huge knotted log. He listened closely and was certain he heard a twig crack under the light tread of a woman, whose garments he could hear trailing against the bushes.

As the moon, now rising high above the forest, disclosed the willowy outlines of a woman within the haunted dell—and that woman Huldah Stratton, whose face he had not meant to look upon again—his feelings can be better imagined than described.

He passed his hand rapidly across his eyes, as one sometimes does when a sudden blindness is experienced, and found his vision had not deceived him. While condemning her lack of maidenly discretion—for he thought the girl was here by appointment—he could not help feeling something of the old tenderness for her.

"A last good-bye, sweet spirit of the dell," he lightly remarked, turning to leave the spot. "I'm not so base as to spy upon you. Be happy with your country lover—alone with silence and the stars. Humph! what fine phrases suggest themselves to-night. Ah, she is coming, and may see me in the moonlight."

The girl came close to the river, and, to his horror, started to cross upon the log. He must warn her of the danger, for the uncertain light of the moon rendered the situation perilous. Picking up a few stones he meant to frighten her by splashing them in the water. But in the meantime he made a discovery—one of so startling a nature, that his heart seemed to have ceased its beating.

Huldah was a sleep-walker! She had on her white school dress and wore her slippers, which indicated that she had not retired for the night, but fell asleep during the evening. He knew that people who go about in sleep seldom come to harm unless awakened at the wrong time; and this made him more hopeful, for when she had crossed he would gently arouse her. The river mocked him with demoniac laughter as it hurried onward, eager to dash its moonlit waters into the white foam of the cataract below, while, sure-footed as a fawn, the girl continued her journey.

"Tu-whit! tu-whoo!" He knew that cry; it was the shrill signal of the gray owl, and was answered from point to point along the river.

Huldah started as if awakening from some horrid dream, held out her arms imploringly, and sank into the deep, swiftly flowing waters of the Mahahlah.

The next instant almost, Doctor Bramhall, divested of his outer clothing, was struggling with her in his arms against the strong current, which had borne her near the rocks and inflicted a cruel wound on her temple.

“Huldah—my poor darling!” he cried, as a low moan escaped her lips. He was a strong swimmer, but, burdened as he was, the still stronger currents bore them away from the shore, and he could not reach the boats of the charcoal burners moored somewhere above.

The deep murmur of the falls fell upon his ear, and in the moonlight sparkled the white spray as it shot up from the ledges, giving warning of the dangers below. Their nearness to the rapids filled him with dismay; but he grew wonderfully calm, for the course of the river was taking them shorewards, and as a drowning man will catch at straws, so he watched for some overhanging tree by the river.

Huldah had lost all consciousness, and lay pale and rigid upon his arm. The whirlpool was surely drawing them into its vortex; all hope seemed futile. Once he clutched wildly at the low branches of a willow, only to find his weight too great for these trees, which, excepting a giant elm above the whirlpool, were the only ones growing over

the river. This tree was his last hope—a forlorn hope, it is true, but he might gain support from its low-hanging branches till help arrived.

But would anyone be likely to come in search of them? he wondered. Perhaps Therese might listen for his step on the garden walk, as she had done before when he was off on his late rambles, and becoming alarmed at his long delay, arouse her father. And then, yielding to some strange influence of the time, he thought how much easier it was to die with Huldah, for she would penetrate with him the mysteries of death. But a look into her pale face, as she drifted with him, dispelled these selfish fancies.

His cries for help echoed through the forest, floated away on the river, and reverberated from cave-like hollows in its banks. Once he fancied that he heard a feeble shout in reply. Yes! it was plainer now, and coming gradually nearer each time. This discovery infused a new courage, and being now underneath the big elm, he had strength enough to seize its low branches, which he held with a desperate resolve to meet death calmly, if such was to be the will of fate. How idle to think of death with help so near! But a feeling of drowsiness and languor was stealing over him, every nerve in his body seemed drawn to its utmost tension, and he knew they could not much longer endure the strain.

To his horror he found the bough was breaking; this he

had not looked forward to, and it filled him with despair. He would soon be at the mercy of the whirlpool, which, at least, would not let him sink until drawn into its terrible vortex. A faint gleam from the moon, shining softly down through the branches, lighted them on to death. He listened breathlessly to know if friends were yet in search of them, but the loud roaring of the cataract was all he heard.

Out from the darkness of the shore crept a shadowy boat, which was being rapidly rowed down river by a boy—none other than our young friend Linky Parks, whose garments were dripping from an involuntary bath in the river. He had tumbled from the rocks into the water, when Bramhall's wild laughter rang out on the quiet night, but luckily found this boat near the shore.

Linky, as we know, possessed a boy's love for Huldah Stratton, and this devotion led him to follow her into the forest. He had gone to bed shortly after dark, leaving Huldah sitting at a window watching the moon coming up over the mountains.

"Poor Huldah!" thought the boy, as he tried to go to sleep, "she aint very happy to-night, and I know why. She's in love with the Doctor. But she won't marry him, 'cause she's only a country girl and aint like his folks. I heard her cryin' on marm's shoulder, and know what he said when he kissed her to-day. Of course she had to tell

marm all about it—or may be her heart would bust. Jee-whiz! girls is funny things after all.”

Linky could not go to sleep as usual; he wanted to do so, in order to visit his beaver trap early in the morning. Why is it that a boy's imagination is never so fertile as when bed-time comes? His pillow assumed queer shapes, but sleep eluded the youngster's grasp; and he tried many expedients to get asleep, such as saying his prayers backwards, marking the ticking of the clock, and counting imaginary sheep as they jumped over the pasture bars. His active brain disclosed sheep black and white, little and big, vaulting through the air, but even this old-time narcotic failed to act, and he dressed himself and stole out to the orchard.

The moon having now climbed over the hill tops, he did not feel afraid, but at once started toward the river. He had not gone far before he saw a woman ahead of him in the path. So great was his surprise, as he drew nearer, to find in her his teacher, that he followed on without speaking, full of a boy's curiosity regarding her errand so late at night.

He had left her alone in the twilight, at a window fronting the river, where she watched the moonbeams play upon the water till she fell asleep. Poor girl!—the musings at the window were unhappy ones; sleep was as a balm to her sad heart. And with the drowsy god came a wild, strange dream about the dell, which led her in slumber as we have seen.

The course of the narrative takes us again to the Mahalah, where we left Linky pulling the boat in the direction whence proceeded Doctor Bramhall's cries. He had seen him jump into the river, but could not gain the spot in time. But by following the sound of his voice, Linky now reached the exhausted man, who, clinging to the boat, was safely taken to the shore—saved from death and the whirlpool.

"God bless you, my brave lad!" he said to Linky, as with Huldah in his arms he sank upon the shore. "You have saved us from a terrible fate. But now go for help to the nearest place. Your teacher must be quickly cared for, or she may die!"

When Huldah Stratton regained consciousness the gray light of morning was stealing over her couch in the cottage of the charcoal burners. By her side Doctor Bramhall knelt, with touch as delicate as a woman's.

The scene at the river all came back to her now: the sudden awakening, her fall from the log, and the recognition of her rescuer before she became insensible. But Linky—how came he here?

The Doctor wisely forbade all mental excitement, while he stopped her words of gratitude with—a kiss! He understood his patient perfectly at this moment, and, thanks to the whispered consultation he had held with Linky, the diagnosis of his first case of somnambulism was productive of mutual felicity.

And now it is August again. Bless me! how the months roll round. Huldah has been married nearly a year, and with Doctor Bramhall is visiting Therese at the Elms.

But you thought—Ah! dear reader, speculation in love affairs availeth little. Hearts are much the same to-day as they have always been. There are mountains we cannot climb; there are rivers we may not cross; there are hopes that will never find fruition! But there is also “a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will.”



IN CASCO BAY.

“ I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.”—*Longfellow.*

“**T**HERE will be no school this afternoon,” said Professor Clyde, the new teacher at Sunnyglade Academy, as he was about to open the morning session. At this unexpected good news, every boy in the school looked up with astonishment. But still no one ventured to ask the reason why, for they as yet stood half in awe of their stern-browed instructor.

“ We will take a half holiday,” continued the Professor, glancing over his gold-bowed glasses to note the effect of these words.

“ I presume you would like to make an excursion to the seashore ; and as I have the idea of giving you a pleasure trip, I hope to meet you all here after dinner for that purpose. A train will take us to Seaview, and I have engaged a schooner there for a trip down the bay. Attention now to studies, and remember to be in season this afternoon.”

At the time named the boys were ready for the train, and after an hour's ride they reached Seaview on the shores of Casco Bay, where Professor Clyde had made every necessary preparation for a pleasant afternoon.

They were to embark at once on the schooner *Sophier Ann*, which had a short while before come up from Fisherman's Ridge to take the excursion party aboard. Skipper Barnabas, who owned the schooner, was thoroughly familiar with the bay, and had a good crew to manage the vessel, so there was little fear that any accident would happen to mar the pleasures anticipated.

As a part of the afternoon's enjoyment, they were to land on one of the many islands in the bay and there indulge in a "clam-bake" and "cunner-fry," which in themselves would make a delicious supper, to say nothing of the generous supply of eatables brought from the Academy.

Now that all were on board the schooner, the skipper lost no time in getting under sail. After clearing from the wharf, the vessel's course was shaped for the Portland side of the bay, as the wind was most favorable in that quarter, and also because it would afford a finer view of the surrounding scenery.

Away sped the light-footed *Sophier Ann*, and in a short time was discerned the Cleaves monument on the eastern promenade of the city, with green foliage towering beyond; while below glistened the harbor where ships were lying at anchor, where busy island steamers were

puffing under heavy burdens, and where grim-looking fortresses kept watch over the scene.

The wind was now blowing quite fresh, and the boys sniffed the salty-flavored breeze with evident relish. It was a beautiful afternoon. Many sails were seen among the islands, but in the other direction—out to sea—it was almost deserted, save for one or two small vessels that were part of the mackerel fleet.

If the reader has never looked “out to sea,” perhaps it will be hard to understand any description. But if you can imagine yourself on some high cliff with water everywhere before you, till the sky shuts down on it like a huge umbrella, a faint idea may be formed of the spectacle. The sight is not a grand one, and after a while the eye grows tired of its monotony, but yet in it there is a fascination for those who love the mysterious.

Look at yonder vessel just coming out from the harbor, which proves to be a barkentine bound for the West Indies. Everything is bustle and stir on board, for they are fairly getting under sail.

Was that a dog barking? you ask. Oh, yes; every ship should have one on board, or what would they do for the *dog-watch*? And very likely you will find a hencoop, too, filled with cackling biddies, or perhaps see a sleek-looking cat asleep in the sunshine, with her weather eye fixed on the shaggy Newfoundland baying at the gulls.

All these will be rare company for the homesick cabin

boy, when the ship is far from his native shores. How it will gladden his heart some morning to awaken from a sweet, lingering dream of home, and hear the hens clamoring for their breakfast, led on by the fussy old rooster with gay plumage, who crows as lustily as if he were perched on the barnyard fence far away in Maine.

And is that cat really a cat o' nine tails? No, indeed; she has but one tail, and that is often one too many for puss, as it is liable to be stepped on by the clumsy cook. But you must not ask any more questions at this time. See, the crew are going aloft to set the topsails, and the pilot is climbing over the side of the vessel. Now he has dropped into his boat, the line is thrown off, and the barkentine leaves him bobbing up and down in her wake.

Skipper Barnabas was an old fisherman, and as they drew near the mackerel boats, his practiced eye saw that they had struck a "school" of these fish, and were pulling them in at a lively rate. The boys were greatly excited at the scene, and, of course, wanted to catch some mackerel for supper instead of fishing for cunners. So a rush was made for the lines, and everything got in readiness.

If the reader lives where brooks and streams abound, very likely he has ensnared many a silvery trout by skimming a buzzing fly over the surface, or coaxed many a lazy fish up from the sandy bottom by baiting his hook with a wriggling worm. This may do very well for trout and the

like, but the mackerel do not care for such dainties, and the fishermen would fare poorly if they had to stop and bait the hooks.

Instead of this a quantity of finely ground bait is thrown overboard, which floats upon the sea, and soon the surface of the water is covered with the hungry mackerel. Those on the vessels now begin work with the lines, which continues until the fish have kept them. It luckily happened that the skipper had left a small quantity of this bait aboard the schooner, or else the boys would have lost their sport.

"There seems to be suthin' wrong over there," remarked Skipper Barnabas, with a nod of his head in the direction of the fishermen. "Lookit the way they're hurryin' round, and pullin' in their lines! Shouldn't wonder if they've found a whale, for there's a man with a harpoon in his hand."

"I did'nt know they were ever found in this latitude, or at least not so near land," said Professor Clyde.

"They aint, generally, sartin; but once in a while they happen to get chased into the Gulf Stream, or maybe foller a school of sbarks this way, and then it's nat'ral for 'em to rove around after cold water again."

At the mere mention of whales each boy wanted to be the first to see this monarch of the deep. Some went aloft the better to watch for "blows," as they had often read of

this practice in whaling stories; others ran to the vessel's side, while Fattie Fink, who volunteered to act as the boatswain, stood ready to blow his whistle in case the crew should get orders to go in pursuit. The schooner had but one boat, however, and perhaps it was just as well that no such order was given; for, of course, no boy would have felt willing to give up the pleasure of chasing a probable descendant of the whale that made itself immortal by befriending Jonah the Ninevite.

The skipper was right, however, about there being some excitement among the fishermen. It was evident that a large fish was the object of attention, and it had very likely driven away the mackerel.

"It's a shark! it's a shark!" cried some of the boys on the schooner, as a huge fish appeared upon the surface of the sea, its body shining in the bright sunlight.

"No! no! It looks just like a young whale!" cried another.

"Whereabouts is it? I don't see nary a shark, nor whale, nor nothin' else but that red buoy yonder!" This question was asked by Skipper Barnabas, whose vision was not of the best.

"Just the other side of the buoy. Look! there he goes; now he's under that floating sea-weed!"

"No; he isn't there now! Must have dived down again."

Such conjectures as these were freely expressed, but all

went wide of the mark, so far as the kind of fish was concerned.

"It's a sea serpent! Sure as you're born, it is!" cried Fattie Fink, with great earnestness of spirit.

"Joe Blodgett told me there was one in Royals river, and that aint far from here, you know. And he said it had two heads and fourteen tails; because it chased his grandfather once, and he stopped to count 'em."

"Ye're all on yer wrong," remarked Skipper Barnabas, who had now sighted the object of so much curiosity. "'Taint neither a shark, nor a whale, nor a sea-serpent—but a whoppin' big hoss mack'ril."

"Do you mean old Neptune's horse?" asked Ralph Osborne, who had long cherished a wish to see this wonderful animal, and still hoped there was such a thing in the sea. "What sort of a fish is it, anyway?"

"A hoss mack'ril," said the skipper, as he gave the wheel a turn or two, "is just like any other mack'ril, only it's bigger, and weighs two or three hundred pounds sometimes. You boys orter read your grammar more, so's to find out sich things."

"Professor, you seem to be a smart kind o' sailor, so s'pose you take a turn at the wheel, while I have a hand in the sport too. They're tryin' to throw a harpoon at the hoss, and it won't do to have them Cape 'Lizabeth chaps get ahead of us, nohow. There, that's it—steady now! Just keep her a leetle more to the south'ard."

After this instruction the skipper went below, but he soon re-appeared with a rusty old harpoon, sharp enough to suit his purpose.

The huge mackerel was sporting in the water, and was evidently enjoying itself. As it came nearer the schooner, her gallant skipper aimed a blow with the harpoon, but the rope was not long enough and the spear fell short of the mark. The fish soon showed itself again as if to further tempt the fates, and wriggled its tail in defiance to the Sophier Ann.

"It's no use tryin' to do anything with this ere harpoon, I guess," said Skipper Barnabas at last. "We'll have to try some other way, after all. There's more'n one way to kill a cat, and there orter be more'n one way to kill a hoss mack'ril. One of you git me a piece of that pork you brought aboard, and we'll try another dodge. If I can only git a hook in his mouth, there's lots of fun for you boys, and we'll have a chance to see who's the strongest puller."

"You surely don't mean to catch that big fish with a hook?" said Professor Clyde, with astonishment.

"Cert'nly, I do. I've got some extra strong halibut hooks that'll hold him, and we can tie on a small hawser to pull in on."

The large hook was now baited, while a strong rope was tied to it, and the skipper again took position at the side

of the vessel. The tide carried the tempting morsel within sight of the horse mackerel, which began to swim nearer and nearer, till all at once it turned and made a rush for the pork, taking hook and all into its mouth. With a skillful twist of the line, Skipper Barnabas hooked the victim through the upper jaw, and took a sort of half-hitch in the rope, which held the struggling fish firmly.

"Hooray! we've got him! we've got him!" yelled the excited skipper, bracing himself against the capstan.

The boys at once sprang to the rope, and all joined lustily in the skipper's song of "Yo-ho! heave yo!"

The more the boys pulled, the more the horse mackerel struggled to get free. Suddenly a happy idea seemed to occur to the fish. Up to this time every inch of advantage was dearly earned, for the "hoss" was a very balky one, and little disposed to be led by a ring in its nose. Of course, as the boys hauled the rope taut, all that kept them on their balance was the weight of the fish at the other end; and when, all at once, it changed tactics and darted toward them, they tumbled over each other like a row of nine-pins. The minute they fell the line was jerked from their hands by the fish going in an opposite direction, and if the skipper had not been careful to tie it to the capstan, the sport would have ended right here.

So soon as they were on their feet again, the horse mackerel was taken in hand for the second time, but it was

growing weaker by its struggles. Yet the huge fish was slowly being drawn out of the water, till in a short while it was floundering on the schooner's deck, twisting its body into many shapes and trying very hard to escape from its captors.

Now came the tug of war. The mackerel was fully four feet long, and gave the boys all they could do to manage it. They were pulled all over the deck and tumbled against the masts, besides receiving other injuries during the struggle.

Some of the younger ones grew frightened at the new turn of affairs, and climbed up into the rigging, from whence they offered wise suggestions to those below. It was all very well while they were chasing the horse mackerel, but when the tables were turned they failed to see anything funny in it.

"Some of you drop the line and club the pesky thing, or it'll have us all overboard," cried Skipper Barnabas.

One or two of the boys armed themselves with heavy sticks, which had been brought aboard for firewood, and Snowball, the darkey cook, now appeared on deck with his carving knife.

But the boys did little harm to the fish, even if they hit it at all. The fat boatswain managed to put his stick between its jaws, and in return got a blow from its tail fair in the stomach. Then another boy took his place, but met with no better success.

There is no telling how long this would have continued had not Snowball, by a misdirected stroke of the knife, severed the line and allowed the horse mackerel to escape into the sea.

"There, you've done it now!" cried the boys. "All our trouble for nothing. What made you cut the rope, Snowball?"

"I didn't do it a-purpose, anyway," said the grinning Snowball.

"It is just as well, after all," said the Professor. "The fish would be of no value to us. Let it go back to its native element, for it has certainly earned its freedom."

"'Taint so much the hoss I care about," remarked Skipper Barnabas, "as 'tis the glory of beatin' them Cape fellers over yonder. And, besides, it's got my best halibut hook, too."

"As to the glory of the affair," returned Professor Clyde, "I guess your reputation is all right, as you pulled the fish aboard, while it was only by accident that it got away. And now we'd better steer for the island, before it gets any later."

The stars were twinkling in the dark sky when the party arrived at Seaview that night. Owing to the winds and tides they were longer delayed than was expected, but this only pleased the boys all the better. A memorable afternoon had waned to its close, and the time is far distant when its events will be forgotten at Sunnyglade.

THE MAJOR'S APE.

DRIP, drip, drip! Would the sunshine never relieve us from this enforced imprisonment within the grim walls of Berkley Grange? It seemed, indeed, as if this oft-repeated question might safely be answered in the negative, judging from the dull aspect of the heavens, which gave no token of fairer weather. For three whole days had the rain drops beat a pitiless fusilade against the window pane, and tumbled the gold and purple leaves from the stately beech and maple, till their half denuded branches presented that sorry spectacle suggestive of autumnal decay, and on the fourth day of our arrival there was no apparent cessation of hostilities—not even the prospect of a patched-up armistice of a few hours only, in which to explore the surroundings of that crumbling old relic of the past called the Grange.

“Confound this beastly weather!” was the frequent expression of our grizzled old Major, whose guests we were, as he paced up and down the long library, or gazed abstractedly into the glowing hearth; for though the season was not cold, in the sense in which that term is commonly used, yet this excessive humidity rendered a glow of warmth

from the shining products of Newcastle most acceptable indeed.

This imprecation upon the state of the weather was invariably seconded by two officers of Her Majesty's Lancers, lounging in that languid manner peculiar to military men off duty. And it certainly was provoking. Only a week of our furlough remained, before we should go marching back to India or the Transvaal—we hardly knew which, owing to the red tape measures in which all governments delight; and as yet we had not been permitted to realize the object of our pilgrimage down into the very heart of Devonshire—a fox hunt across the hills and dales of one of the most famous courses in all England.

If it were not for the Major's ape time would have dragged wearily with Leigh and myself, despite Berkley's open hospitality, and the charm of Madeline's ballads and subtle glances as we hung over the piano and turned her music. But it is not my purpose, in alluding to that really charming girl, to "lute and flute fantastic tenderness." I am, at best, an old dog of war, and loyal only to my queen. To Leigh, who is much the younger and better looking, belongs the privilege of writing a panegyric on the subject of feminine charms. Egad! but the boy made love like a soldier.

Jocko was a rare companion during those rainy days. He was, moreover, the finest specimen of the ape species I

had ever seen, and seemed endowed with an intelligence that much inclined us toward the Darwinian view of things. In stature Jocko bore no slight resemblance to a man, being four feet two and one-quarter inches tall, well proportioned, and when walking erect, as he invariably did, presented a soldierly bearing. The Major, who had received his strange protégé from a friend at the Zoo, had taught the animal a number of clever maneuvers, and as Jocko was docile and willing to learn, we found pleasure in imparting a supplementary course of instruction in military ethics, which seemed to impress the ape with the gravity of the discipline he so patiently underwent. So in teaching Jocko to turn and wheel, right-about and left-oblique, while he varied the march to suit his own whims, Leigh and I in a measure grew reconciled to our environment, and talked less of hounds and foxes, till even the Major ceased to dilate upon the charms and dangers of the chase.

Berkley Grange, like all old mansions that link the traditions of the past with the doubting, matter-of-fact to-day, had its ghostly visitant that periodically performed all the duties incumbent upon a conscientious spirit of the race. The latest phase in its history, however, according to the servants, would seem to be the adoption of a semi-military style of dress and a habit of parading with drawn sword through the deserted corridors, to finally vanish in thin air

behind a life-size portrait of George III, as if that grim old tyrant was still the refuge of evil doers fleeing from the light of a dawning rationalism.

We were discussing his ghostship with the Major, and also discussing a bottle of very old Madeira by way of rendering the discussion all the more spirited, when he informed us that the family jewels had been purloined from their usual place, and every effort to discover them had proved futile. What was of infinitely more consequence, the very legal documents by which his ancestral halls were insured to future Berkleys were also missing, and irreparable ruin would follow their ultimate loss.

Allow me, at the outset, to say that a belief in the supernatural, with all that the term implies, has never been included in my category of shortcomings. Either from the precocity of childhood, or some other cogent reason, the seeds of superstition so industriously sown in the nursery have fallen on barren ground, and have not attained to the gigantic proportions of the grain of mustard seed, in whose umbrageous branches the birds of evil omen may croak the constant pratings of a silly nurse. Still, I must confess to a sensation akin to that described by the shade of Hamlet's father—where each particular hair manifests a disposition to stand on end—when, as I was groping my way along the dark corridors that night, I distinctly saw a ghostly figure pacing in pensive mood, and immediately vanish through

the wall. By the faint light I could distinguish the showy epaulets of an army officer, and fancied I saw the gleaming of a sword, as if saluting some imaginary superior.

Of course I was laughed at in the morning when I recounted my experience with the ghost. The Major pooh-poohed and laughingly attributed it to a phantasy of sleep, induced by undue quantities of salad; while Leigh, with a significant wink, insinuated that the juice of the grape, combined with the narcotic properties of a good cigar, sometimes had a demoralizing effect upon our mental perceptions.

"To convince you of the utter absurdity of your story, Colonel, we will join you to-night in watching the movements of this nocturnal prowler," said Leigh, which proposition was immediately accepted.

Nothing unusual revealed itself this time; but I prevailed upon Leigh to continue the vigil the next night, though the Major refused any further participation in what he characterized as a piece of tom-foolery. Fortunately, the weather had now cleared, and the light from the full moon streaming in through the hall windows made it easy for us to discern objects.

"I hope you are satisfied now," growled Leigh, who was beginning to grow sleepy.

I looked at my watch. It was just three minutes past twelve o'clock—the hour at which wandering spirits are

said to begin their nightly revels. Much chagrined at this lack of punctuality even in a ghost, I was about to acquiesce in Leigh's remark, when a measured tread was heard in the opposite direction, which caused my hitherto incredulous companion to exclaim in a stage whisper :

"By the gods of war, Colonel, here it comes !—and blowed if it isn't of a military turn of mind."

Out into the moonlight marched a strange apparition sword in hand, with all the precision of evolution which characterizes an old soldier, and made directly for the place where two hitherto valiant disciples of Mars were tremblingly watching his proceedings.

My attention was now called in another direction by a low chuckle from Leigh, who was almost in a paroxysm of suppressed laughter. As soon as he could recover from this sudden attack of Momus, he whispered :

"What a precious pair of idiots we've made of ourselves ! Frightened half to death by the antics of an ape !"

Sure enough, it was Jocko, attired in the Major's scarlet soldier coat, and with his sword taken from its place in the hall.

We were particularly anxious as to what would be the next move, as the object of attention was now opposite the artist's tribute to departed majesty, the supposed point of disappearance. Nor were we disappointed. As if conscious of something before forgotten, the ape took a short

survey of George III, when lo! the massive tablet on which he was painted slowly moved to one side, and Jocko disappeared through the opening. Then I recollected the Major had told us of this secret passage to the west wing, now unused save as the repository for antique rubbish. The ape, undoubtedly, had learned how to open the panel, having seen his master do so when showing the Grange to visitors.

So suddenly was this done that had it not been for Leigh's presence of mind, our adventure would have ended right here; but with commendable promptness he stayed the slowly-closing panel by fastening it back with a chair, and fairly dragged me in after him just in time to see Jocko disappearing down a flight of narrow stairs. Luckily for us, the moon shed a refulgent light through a narrow grating partly overgrown with ivy, by which we were able to follow our guide, which was now a matter of great moment with us, as presenting the only means of solving the mystery of his movements. Judge of our surprise, on emerging again into the moonlight, to find Jocko gleefully examining the Berkley jewels, dazzlingly beautiful in their clusters and pendants. The cunning ape had concealed the casket in this secret passageway, and his midnight journeys thereto were, it was evident, the subject of the ghostly sights and sounds narrated by the servants.

Everything was now plainly apparent. Jocko, with that

inborn love for mischief which is a notable trait in his species, had ransacked his master's room and stolen the precious casket, caring nothing for the papers it contained, but fascinated by the brilliancy of the gems that reposed within its velvety depths. But what strange freak of his monkey brain had led him to this hiding place, where at night, in all the pomp of borrowed plumage, he could gloat over his treasures in security? Our actions in teaching him to play soldier might account for the possession of the coat and sword, but as gentlemen we protest that we never, by precept or by example, inculcated dishonest practices even in an ape.

It was desirable, as well as important, that the jewels and papers should be restored to Berkley at once, lest they might be secreted in some other place. To this end, Leigh advanced abruptly upon Jocko, when the now surprised and maddened creature, giving a strange cry, attacked us with all the fury of its savage nature.

This we had not expected, and in the struggle that followed it required all our efforts to protect ourselves, for the ape made good use of his teeth and nails, and actually tried to wield the Major's sword.

I am not a vain man, but the loss of my whiskers would subject me to personal chagrin, besides making me the butt of my brother officers; and as the ape was literally pulling out my beard by handfuls, perhaps this reflection, equally

as much as the pain I suffered, led me to tighten my grip on the animal's throat. Those of you who have witnessed the drama of Virginius remember the closing scene, where that grand old Roman throttles Appius Claudius. Well, I was the Virginius of the hour! But, to my lasting sorrow, when Jocko's hairy paws relinquished the hold upon my beard the poor ape fell dead at my feet.

The grief of the Major at the death of his pet was commensurate with the joy occasioned by the recovery of his deeds and jewels. In justice to myself, however, I will say that he still warmly grasps the hand that gave Jocko his quietus. Our adventure with the ghost secured me the Major's friendship for life, while Leigh received for his reward the hand of Madeline Berkley, for which he boldly asked the next morning.







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